



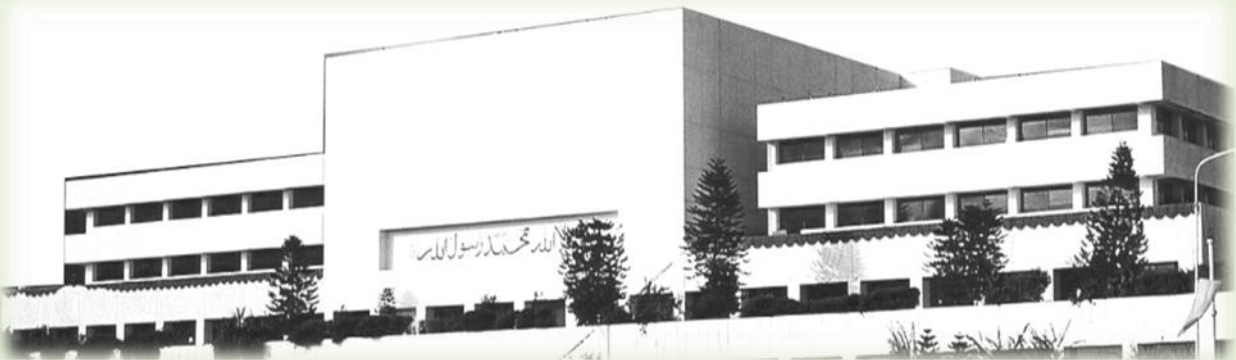
**Report on:**

**5<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)**

**Asia Regional Conference,**

**Islamabad**

**July 29 – August 2, 2019**



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## PREFACE

Under the visionary leadership of the Honourable Speaker, Mr. Asad Qaiser, the National Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan had the pleasure of hosting the 5<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Asia Regional Conference in Islamabad from July 29 – August 2, 2019. The theme of the event was, **“Envisioning Parliamentary Paths towards a Diverse and Developed South Asia.”**

The CPA Asia Region comprises of the federal Parliaments of Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka as well as the four Provincial Assemblies of Pakistan. It is a matter of great honour for Pakistan that in addition to Sri Lanka and the four provincial assemblies, the parliamentary delegations from Malaysia, the UK, Cameroon and Uganda and the legislative assemblies of Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir also attended the conference as special guests. The successful holding of this conference has been yet another milestone in Pakistan’s successful pursuits of effective parliamentary diplomacy.

Overcoming regional issues, promoting harmony, and respect for diversity to safeguard political liberties, requires engagement of the Parliaments. Bearing this in mind, the programme of the conference had been carefully designed in a way, whereby the common and burning issues faced by the regional parliaments got deliberated upon. In addition to the General Debate on the above theme, the Conference also comprised of:

- **Plenary Session** on “Poverty Alleviation in South Asia”
- **Youth Roundtable** on “Making Democracy relevant, recognizing the significance of Youth Voices” organized by Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) and National Assembly’s Young Parliamentarians’ Forum (YPF)
- **Seminar of Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP)** on “Challenges and Impediments against Women in Politics” organized by Women’s Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) and
- **SDGs Panel Discussion** on “Parliamentary Partnership for SDGs” by SDGs Secretariat of the National Assembly of Pakistan.

The collective wisdom and foresightedness reflected in the keynotes and interventions of worthy speakers identified crucial prospects of parliamentary cooperation. These have been very carefully recorded and presented in the form of this report. We, at the National Assembly Secretariat, have put our efforts whole heartedly in the compilation of this conference report and hope that it portrays a comprehensive picture of the proceedings of the conference for the esteemed readers.

Islamabad:  
18<sup>th</sup> November, 2019

**TAHIR HUSSAIN**  
Secretary  
National Assembly of the Islamic  
Republic of Pakistan



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## MESSAGE FROM THE HONOURABLE SPEAKER, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF PAKISTAN

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I am pleased to present to the esteemed readers, the conference report on the 5<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Asia Regional Conference, 2019 held in Islamabad.

The Conference from July 29 to August 2, 2019 had been organized by the National Assembly of Pakistan with the aim to enhance parliamentary linkages in the region. The theme of the Conference – **“Envisioning Parliamentary Paths towards a Diverse and Developed South Asia”** represented the earnest desire of the Parliament of Pakistan to collaborate with legislatures from the South Asian region to come together on a single platform for the common good of our people.



The keen participation by member parliaments in the conference had been most heartening and a sign of their commitment towards strengthening democratic processes and supporting Pakistan’s effort of bringing regional legislatures closer.

Reactivating the CPA Asia by holding this conference not only showed the keen interest of the National Assembly of Pakistan in strengthening member parliaments but also the importance it attaches with the forum of the CPA. It is in this context that the conference had been focused on issues like poverty eradication in South Asia, Challenges to Women in Parliaments, acknowledging Youth in democracies and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals through parliamentary partnerships.

The detailed discussions carried out by worthy parliamentarians and experts have underscored not only our shared problems but also our prospective opportunities. Therefore, the foremost task before the participating legislatures in CPA Asia should be to push our respective governments, through our legislative and oversight role, to utilize the parliamentary foresight of this forum and collaborate on these issues in light of this conference’s deliberations.

In this regard, this conference report summarizes effectively the proceedings of the conference with special emphasis on the recommendations made. I congratulate my team at the National Assembly of Pakistan for the successful holding of the conference and hope that this report shall make for an interesting and informative read for the reader.

**Asad Qaiser**  
Speaker,  
National Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan





## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AJK	Azad Jammu and Kashmir
BAP	Balochistan Awami Party
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CNIC	Computerized National Identity Card
CWP	Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians
CPA	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
ECP	Election Commission of Pakistan
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
GDA	Grand Democratic Alliance
HEC	High Education Commission (of Pakistan)
HLPF	High Level Political Forum
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
JUI-F	Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (Fazl-ur-Rehman)
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
LDC	Legislative Drafting Council
MLA	Member Legislative Assembly
MNA	Member of National Assembly
MPA	Member of Provincial Assembly
MP	Member Parliament
NA	National Assembly
NASP	National Assembly Strategic Plan
OVI	Objectively Verifiable Indicators
PIPS	Parliamentary Institute of Parliamentary Services
PML-N	Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz
PPP	Pakistan People’s Party
PTI	Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf
PTV	Pakistan Television News
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
U.K	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
VNR	Voluntary National Review
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WPC	Women’s Parliamentary Caucus
YPF	Young Parliamentarians Forum





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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The fifth Asia Region Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Conference on was held from 29th July to 2nd August 2019, in Islamabad. Speaker National Assembly, Honourable Asad Qaiser, being the president of the CPA Asia Region, hosted this conference. The CPA aims at promoting parliamentary diplomacy and democratic governance and the aim of this conference was to engage regional legislatures to come together for common good.

The Asia region of the CPA consists of Parliaments of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Provincial Assemblies of four provinces. The theme for this year's Conference was 'Envisioning Parliamentary Paths towards a Diverse and Developed South Asia.' Parliamentarians from across Asian Region became part of the conference to discuss challenges for poverty alleviation in South Asia, challenges and impediments against women in politics, achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with parliamentary partnerships and making democracy relevant for youth.

Honourable delegates from the parliaments of Sri Lanka, Uganda, Cameroon, Malaysia, UK, the four provincial assemblies of Pakistan and legislative assemblies of GB and AJ&K participated in the conference. The delegates started arriving in Islamabad, Pakistan on 29th July, 2019. The conference formally commenced from 30th July, 2019. The day started with meeting of the branch secretaries at 0900 hours followed by meeting of the executive committee at 1000 hours.

### **Day One**

The conference was formally inaugurated in an impressive opening ceremony with President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, H.E. Dr. Arif Alvi as the chief guest. The inaugural ceremony was attended by Honourable J. M. Ananda Kumarasiri, M.P., Deputy Speaker from the Parliament of Srilanka, Honourable Speakers from Provincial Assemblies of Punjab, KPK, Baluchistan and Sindh, Rt. Honourable Rebecca A. Kadaga, Speaker of Parliament of Uganda and CPA President, Honourable Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Cameroon and Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee, Honourable Dr. Dato' Noraini Ahmad, Member of the Federal Parliament of Malaysia and Chairperson, Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), Special Guests from Uganda, UK, Malaysia, Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Jammu Kashmir Legislative Assemblies and Mr. Akbar Khan, Secretary General CPA. In their addresses, the participants and guests congratulated the Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan for hosting the event. They appreciated the efforts made by Pakistan to revive the CPA Asia region and termed it as a great opportunity of learning for participating legislatures. The ceremony ended on wishes for a successful conference.

The second half of Day One of the conference was based on plenary session with the theme: **“Challenges for Poverty Eradication in South Asia.”** It was chaired by Honourable Senator and Leader of the House for Senate of Pakistan, Syed Shibli Faraz. Dr. Sania Nishtar, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Social Protection & Poverty Alleviation and Chairperson, Benazir Income Support Programme briefed about the initiatives of the Government of Pakistan regarding poverty alleviation especially the recently launched Ehsaas Programme. Honourable Lord Purvis of Tweed highlighted the role which commonwealth could play with global organizations engaged in poverty alleviation. Honourable Dato’ Haji Mohd Rashid Bin Hasnon, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malaysia emphasized on elevating socio-economic status of a country to achieve elimination of poverty. Syed Firdous Shamim Naqvi, Honourable Leader of the Opposition in the Provincial Assembly of Sindh while portraying the dismal situation of the poor in Pakistan stressed that conferences and sessions like these were vital to elicit fruitful debates on such crucial and core issues.

The day concluded with mesmerizing cultural performances at Pakistan National Council of Arts. The cultural evening was arranged for respected visiting guests and international delegates to enjoy Pakistan’s cultural and regional diversity by showcasing the beautiful culture of its various provinces. These included enthralling performances from Punjab, KPK, Sindh, Baluchistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan. From Punjabi *Bhangra* to *Khattak* dance, *Balochi* dance to Sindhi *Hojamalo*, *Kashmiri* to *Balti* dance, performers sketched the true picture of the rich culture, which Pakistan possesses. The event was well appreciated by all attending.

## **Day Two**

Day Two of the CPA Asia Conference was divided into three sessions. It included Commonwealth Women’s Parliamentarians’ (CWP) Seminar on Challenges and Impediments against Women in Politics, Youth Round Table on Making Democracy Relevant; Why is it Important to Recognize Young Voices? and SDG’s Panel Discussion on Parliamentary Partnerships for SDGs.

A CWP Seminar on **“Challenges and Impediments Against Women in Politics”** was hosted by WPC on 31st July 2019. It consisted of four technical sessions namely, Prioritizing Women’s Issues as National Issues, The Push Towards Backbenches in the House, The “General Seat” vs the “Reserved Seat” Bias and Male Dominant Party Structure.

Distinguished panelists included three leading women rights experts, one woman legislator from Cameroon and ten legislators from Pakistan. Around 120+ participants including Legislators, CSOs, diplomatic corps, academia, and media attended the seminar. The welcome address was delivered by Dr. Fehmida Mirza. She is a member the CWP’s Executive Committee, Patron of WPC and the Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination. Dr. Mirza emphasized that



political parties should ensure women's participation at the decision-making forums. The opening address was presented by WPC Secretary, and CPA Steering Committee Member, Ms. Munaza Hassan; who also moderated the seminar. She elaborated on how PTI's government aims to achieve the vision of 'New Pakistan', under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan. She also acknowledged all strategic partners and alliances who are working with WPC to increase capacities of women parliamentarians and create enablers for pro-women legislation. The seminar was chaired by Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Cameroon and Chairperson of CPA Executive Committee, Honourable Ms. Emilia Lifaka. In her concluding remarks she appreciated the Pakistani government on providing political space to Pakistani women. She related that as an indicator of willingness of men to ensure that voices of women are heard. Additionally, she stated that women's political participation affects the choice of policy issues and types of solutions that are offered.

Candid conversations were generated on, how to practically increase women's role in politics and remove societal, cultural and institutional barriers that prevent women from participating in politics. The consensus was that, Pakistan needs more political participation of women through added and effectual affirmative action; so that reduction in gender inequalities could be visible.

Key recommendations that emerged from the Seminar were as follows, **i.** Quota for women parliamentarians in Parliamentary Sub-Committees as Chairwomen and as participants may be allocated, **ii.** Enhancing the skills and information base of backbenchers through structured capacity building exercises, **iii.** Customization and context-specific adoption of best practices from other countries such as UK, **iv.** Awarding of reserved seats to genuine political workers should be on merit, **v.** Identification of the need for a law which ensures, women parliamentarians (general and reserved seats) are given development funds and are trusted to invest on issues they resonate with, **vi.** Quota for women where they could contest direct elections against other women.

Powerful and passionate messages by all distinguished speakers and participants provided as a pedestal with an invigorated focus on issues of people. Strategic calls for action to expand involvement, representation and accomplishment of women in politics and parliament included, **i.** Elimination of all barriers to women's participation in politics, **ii.** Working with men for pro-women legislation and enabling environment, **iii.** Initiation of an international women's caucus.

Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services and National Assembly's Young Parliamentarians' Forum (YPF) organized **Youth Roundtable – "Making Democracy relevant, recognizing the significance of youth voices"** on Wednesday July 31, 2019 at Serena Hotel Islamabad. Held under the rubric of the 5<sup>th</sup> CPA Asia Region Conference, the Roundtable was attended by around 150 participants including international delegates from Sri Lanka and United Kingdom, Members of Parliament from National as well as Provincial and Legislative Assemblies, Youth Representatives, Parliamentary officials from National Assembly and PIPS, and media representatives.

Keynote address was delivered by Hon. Senator Mr. Azam Swati, Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs. He lauded the efforts of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in promoting dialogue and cooperation among the member countries across the globe. He emphasized the importance of youth over the technology which is often perceived as the driving force behind change in the world.

The roundtable was divided into two main sessions. Chair, Mr. Akbar Khan, Secretary General CPA opened the session and emphasized that the future of our Commonwealth and upholding of our values rested with young people. He laid emphasis on developing the institution of Youth Parliament for building inclusive and effective Parliament.

Each Panel Discussion had three former participants of Commonwealth Youth Parliament with Honorable Shaza Fatima Khwaja, MNA and former Secretary General of Young Parliamentarians Forum, Honorable Mahmood Jan, Deputy Speaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, Honorable Dost Muhammad Mazari, Deputy Speaker Punjab Assembly and Honorable Heshan Withanage, MP Sri Lanka as panelists for the first session; **i)** Youth as building blocks of inclusive democracy **ii)** Youth platforms as stepping stone to the Parliament. Mr. Akbar Khan summed up the discussion by highlighting the key suggestions/areas of focus put forward by the panelists. These included **i)** the importance placed on the role of student unions, **ii)** electoral reforms for raising the voice of youth, and **iii)** the establishment of youth development commissions in order to come up with south youth policies.

The second panel discussion was based on the themes, **i)** Strategies of young Members of Parliament to advance peace, tolerance and prosperity **ii)** Role of Young MPs in enhancing Youth participation in Parliamentary Business. Apart from three former youth participants of the Commonwealth Youth Parliament, the panelists comprised of young parliamentarians - Honorable Munawara Bibi, MNA, Honorable Sumaira Shams, MPA Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Honorable Farrukh Habib, MNA, Honorable Sardar Babar Khan, Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly, Lord Jeremy Purvis, UK House of Lords and Honorable Naz Baloch, MNA.

Honorable Speaker, Mr. Asad Qaiser graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. He assured that the suggestions of this Roundtable will be forwarded for implementation. As a token of appreciation Honorable Speaker presented the book titled “Selected Speeches of Members of the Constituent/National Assembly” to all the panelists as well as the Secretary General CPA.

Mr. Akbar Khan Secretary General, CPA summed up the proceedings by stating that focusing on youth policies and initiatives, very useful suggestions came out of the deliberations. He particularly appreciated the idea of Youth Parliaments for providing training grounds to young leadership across the Commonwealth countries. Education is especially important for empowering youth and making them responsible citizens of society. He said that student unions play important role for providing young people with leadership training.

### **SDG's Panel Discussion** took place on the theme: **“Parliamentary Partnerships for SDGs.”**

The Panel Discussion was carried out in two halves. MNA Ms. Shandana Gulzar Khan moderated both sessions and while the panelists talked about the importance of SDGs. Madam Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Cameroon commenced the discussion by pointing out the loopholes in legislation in implementing and pursuing SDGs goals. Furthermore, Honourable J. M. Andana Kumarsiri, Deputy Speaker of Sri Lanka Parliament highlighted the areas in which Sri Lanka has achieved the SDGs goals. In addition to that Lord Purvis from UK, stressed upon the need to interlink the system globally and work in harmony. Shah Ghulam Qadir, Speaker from AJK Legislative Assembly, narrated their story and explained on how they are working day & night to achieve 100% of the SDGs, despite the volatile situation. Hon. MNA Dr. Nausheen Hamid foregrounded the need to cater problems with a multi-sectoral approach and both Provincial and National Assembly should work synergistically. The first half of the panel discussion ended with Hon. MNA Marriyum Aurangzeb's remarks on importance of media for promoting the global agenda through awareness campaigns. She said media plays an important role in shaping a good society and also for highlighting the issues and creating awareness among people. She also talked about how Pakistan is the first Parliament to develop a Task Force for SDGs.

The session resumed with a new panel. The second session discussed the Sustainable Development Goals and Parliamentary Oversight. Hon. MNA Mr. Lal Chand Ukrani drew the attention of the public towards the lack of basic human rights in Sindh and forced conversions of Hindu girls to Islam. In the end, Hon. MNA Ms. Mehnaz Akbar Aziz stressed upon the fact that children and girls in Pakistan are being neglected and that the Government Policies should address the issues faced by the Children as they are our future.

### **Day Three**

On 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2019, the closing ceremony of the CPA Asia Regional Conference was attended by Honourable Asad Qaiser, Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan, honourable Sardar Babar Khan, Deputy Speaker of Balochistan, honourable Dr. Fehmida Mirza, Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination and the Member of Executive Committee of the CPA, honourable Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee and the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Cameroon, honourable J.M. Ananda Kumarasiri, MP, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Sri Lanka, honourable Palitha Range Bandara, Member of Parliament of Sri Lanka and Mr. Akbar Khan, Secretary General of CPA.

Mr. Palitha Range Bandara, Member of Parliament of Sri Lanka talked about the democratic process in Sri Lanka, the political ups and downs in his country and concluded that the supremacy of law was substantial. Hon. Dr. Fehmida Mirza, Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination and the Member of Executive Committee of the CPA congratulated Mr. Asad

Qaiser, Honourable Speaker of National Assembly of Pakistan for successfully hosting this conference after a gap of nine years. She said that South Asian countries had long been committed to the commonwealth's political values, however, the region still faced challenges. She emphasized that our parliaments had a binding responsibility to seek sustainable solutions to these complex challenges.

Hon. Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee and the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Cameroon expressed immense pleasure to Mr. Asad Qaiser, Speaker of National Assembly of Pakistan. In her address, she focused on poverty eradication, gender discrimination and youth participation for development. She said that in order to overcome these issues, determination and collective efforts were necessary. She praised the formation of Women's Parliamentary Caucus and urged to invest in girl child's education. Hon. J.M. Ananda Kumarasiri, MP, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Sri Lanka said that he strongly believed that he had participated in a very meaning conference. He talked about the similar culture of both, Sri Lanka and Pakistan and appreciated the great hospitality by Pakistan.

Honourable Speaker, National Assembly of Pakistan, Mr. Asad Qaiser expressed gratitude for the vote of thanks proposed by all speakers and distinguished members of delegations. He whole heartedly thanked everyone for their kind appreciation. He assured that National Assembly of Pakistan shall continue to make coordinated efforts to address common regional challenges and strengthen parliamentary ties to forge strategic partnerships. With these words and with immense pleasure, he declared the conference formally closed and wished the guests safe return back home.



# DAY ONE:

30<sup>th</sup> July, 2019

- **Opening Ceremony**  
*“Envisioning Parliamentary Paths towards a Diverse and Developed South Asia”*
- **Plenary Session 1:**  
*“The Challenges for Poverty Eradication in South Asia”*

**Opening Ceremony:**  
**“Envisioning Parliamentary Paths towards a Diverse and Developed South Asia”**

**Inaugural Session**

The inaugural session of the 5<sup>th</sup> CPA Asia Regional Conference was held on 30<sup>th</sup> July, 2019. The President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, H.E. Dr. Arif Alvi inaugurated the conference in an impressive ceremony.

The honorable Speaker National Assembly, H.E. Mr. Asad Qaiser, H.E. Mr. Mahmood Jan, Deputy Speaker of the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, H.E. Sardar Babar Khan, Deputy Speaker of the Provincial Assembly of Balochistan, H.E. Sardar Dost Muhammad Mazari, Deputy Speaker of the Provincial Assembly of Punjab, H.E. Ms. Rehana Leghari, Deputy Speaker of the Provincial Assembly of Sindh and honourable J.M Ananda Kumarasiri, MP, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Sri Lanka participated in event as regional member of the branch.

The President of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda, Rt. Hon. Rebecca A. Kadaga, Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee and Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Cameroon, Hon. Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) and Member of the Federal Parliament of Malaysia, Dato Dr. Noraini Binti Ahmad, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malaysia, Dato Haji Mohd Rashid Bin Hasnon, UK MP, Lord Purvis of Tweed, Asia Pacific Regional Programme Manager, Mr. Robert Harper and Secretary General CPA, Mr. Akbar Khan attended the ceremony on special invitation.

The session commenced with the National Anthem of Pakistan, followed by the recitation of verses from the Holy Quran. Syed Shamoon Hashmi, Joint Secretary (International Relations) National Assembly and Regional Secretary CPA Asia while welcoming the distinguished guests at the event invited Honourable Mr. Asad Qaiser, Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan for his inaugural address.



## **Welcome Address by Honourable Speaker, National Assembly of Pakistan, Mr. Asad Qaiser:**

Honourable Speaker, Mr. Asad Qaiser warmly welcomed the Chief Guest, the officers of the Commonwealth Association, Members of the Branch and other distinguished guests of 5<sup>th</sup> CPA Asia Regional Conference.

Honourable Asad Qaiser said that it was indeed a matter of deep satisfaction to note that despite being nascent democracies, the regional legislatures recognized, valued and supported efforts for nurturing and consolidating democracy. Although the discourse of the democratic development faced multiple obstacles, the roots of democracy



had begun conditioning people's choices in the region. The manifestation of this could be seen through the increasing awareness and the active participation of our people in political dialogues and democratic governance processes. With the rising democratic consciousness among the citizen of the region, people of South Asia were investing in democracies to benefit from a competitive system and to give voice to their interests.

He said that with the progress oriented approach of South Asia since past decade, we looked forward to the promises of democratic deepening and advancement in the region. Cooperation between and among the states in its real sense could be achieved when parliaments built consensus of opinion on matter of interests. In the years ahead, parliaments will have to lead people in tackling some of the major and complex issues.

With South Asia's rise as the global economic, technological and cultural hub, it had become necessary to promptly address and neutralize the common roadblocks jeopardizing the wellbeing, prosperity and future of millions. We need to build synergies and forge partnerships to deliver effectively and there was no better way to achieve this than engaging parliaments- the representative institution of our people.

Further, he said that Members of the Parliament were uniquely positioned to act as an interface between the people and the state institutions, and to promote and adopt people-centered policies and legislation to ensure that no one was left behind. Pakistan was sincerely committed to the Charter of CPA and believed that durable peace and progress in the region were in the interest of

all. As the world moved forward to achieve the common agenda of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we believe that the Parliamentarians have a unique opportunity and constitutional responsibility to play a significant role in supporting and monitoring implementation of the SDGs. Being fully cognizant of this, the Parliament of Pakistan was making conscious efforts of providing appropriate parliamentary fora to ensure that no voice was left unheard. He added that the Parliament of Pakistan was the first Parliament to boast its own Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Secretariat and Young Parliamentarians' Forum (YPF).

He said that he strongly believed that lending opportunities to young people and women for meaningful participation in democratic processes shall further strengthen and capacitate us in achieving international development goals.

He concluded his address by saying that this conference shall focus on matters promoting role of member parliaments in ensuring meaningful and participatory democracy in the region. He also expressed the hope that this forum shall bring the parliaments closer in respect of promoting inclusive democracy, offering attentive ear to vibrant voices of youth and replacing political bias towards women.

With this, he declared 5<sup>th</sup> CPA Asia Regional Conference open and wished this forum all success.

**Address by Rt. Hon. Rebecca A. Kadaga, President of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and Speaker of Parliament of Uganda:**

Rt. Hon. Rebecca A. Kadaga started her address by thanking Dr. Arif Alvi, the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Hon. Asad Qaiser, Speaker of National Assembly of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Hon. Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee, Dato Dr. Noraini Binti Ahmad, Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), Deputy Speakers from Sri Lanka and Malaysia, Heads of Delegations and Distinguished Delegates.

She appreciated the theme of the conference, "Envisioning Parliamentary Paths towards a Diverse and Developed South Asia" and said that it was a great opportunity to use our offices of influence to



build bridges and strengthen networks across an increasingly diverse world. We should work together to provide avenues for good governance and development of our people.

She talked about women empowerment issues. She noted that as per the records with the commonwealth, the Asian countries in general had low levels of women participation in decision making positions. So, it was for the leaders in the Asia region to take another look at the national machinery, so that representation of women in decision making positions was improved at the earliest opportunity. She reiterated that as legislators we should take initiatives to further the conversation on women representation.

At the end, she thanked the distinguished guests and wished good deliberations in the conference.

**Address by Hon. Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee and Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Cameroon:**

She started her address by thanking H.E. Dr. Arif Alvi, the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Hon. Mr. Asad Qaiser, President of the 5<sup>th</sup> CPA Asia Regional Conference and Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan, Rt. Hon. Rebecca A. Kadaga, President of the 64<sup>th</sup> CPC and Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda, Dato Dr. Noraini Binti Ahmad, Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), Right Honourable Speakers and the Heads of delegations, Honourable members of Government of Pakistan, distinguished guests and colleagues.

She said in order to better understand the conference theme “Envisioning Parliamentary Paths towards a Diverse and Developed South Asia”, she had structured her address in four parts namely:

- An overview of CPA;
- Parliament and its role;
- The role that parliaments can play in South Asia; and
- Conclusion.

**Overview of CPA**

The CPA comprised of 180 national and sub national branches. CPA’s main role was to connect, develop, promote and support Parliamentarians and their staff to identify benchmark of good governance and implementation of the enduring values of the commonwealth.



CPA activities focused on the Commonwealth's commitment to its fundamental political values, including; just and honest government, the alleviation of poverty, fundamental human rights, international peace and order, global economic development, the rule of law, equal rights, and representation for all citizens of both genders, the separation of powers among three branches of government and right to participate in free democratic political process.

### **Role of Parliamentary Democracies:**

She said that Parliament, the institution we represent, lied at the forefront of today's modern democratic society as we are representative of people. She urged delegates to strive for policy which created a ripple effect. She opined that this could be achieved by;

Firstly, prioritizing the betterment of our respective societies by using the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a blueprint. These goals were interconnected and in order to leave no one behind, it was important that we achieved each goal target by 2030. As policy makers, we could achieve this by driving more community oriented policies and ensuring government of these policies.

Secondly, while we strive within our ranks and through the strategic partnerships we build across national and continental boundaries, we should not forget to include other stakeholders in our decision making process. We must bring all stakeholders to the table to ensure that policies we seek to develop and implement are truly a representation of the needs and aspirations of our countries.

### **Road to the Future:**

She emphasized that there could be no meaningful development without the involvement of women and youth in the decision making arena. She said that we should invest in youth of today, teach them how to lead, protect the truth and strive to attain the future, we all envisage. That way we could ensure continuity and leave behind a generation with whom we mapped out the future together.

### **Conclusion:**

She said that parliaments needed to ensure that the voice of the voiceless was heard and that the will and aspirations of the majority got addressed. She reiterated that the role of parliament in a diverse and development South Asia must not be undermined. At the end of her address, she thanked distinguished guests and wished the 5<sup>th</sup> CPA Asia Regional Conference huge success.

***Long Live Asia Region, Long live the cooperation existing among the nine Regions; long live the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.***

**Address by Dr. Noraini Binti Ahmad, Chairperson, Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians and Member of Parliament, Malaysia:**

She started her address by thanking Dr. Arif Alvi, the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and distinguished guests. She expressed immense pleasure to be a part of this conference.

Dr. Noraini Binti Ahmad talked about the diversity in South Asia and said that this region had tremendous socio-cultural diversity, which was one of the first noticeable things about the region.

She further said that there was a need for parliamentarians and civil society groups to play significant role in influencing the regional policy as creating paths towards a diverse and developed South Asia needed concrete effort from us.

In this regard, she was of the view that firstly to embrace the changes in 21<sup>st</sup> century, a paradigm shift was needed, especially change in political will was required in order to deal with issues such as globalization, digitalization, gender and industrial revolution. Political will, hence, must be part of the equation for future discussions, especially when it came to women participation in politics or women empowerment. More encouragement should be given to ensure full participation of women in all levels of decision making process, such as in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peace building and protection of women and girls.



Secondly, she believed that it was time for formalization of women empowerment initiatives. She said that CWP's main objective was to increase female participation in parliaments and legislatures. CWP's Strategic Plan 2016-2019 had been developed when the 6 terms of uplifting CWP had been identified. These 6 terms included - building capacity of CWP in the region; CWP communications and profile raising; research; mobilizing CWP alumni; CWP leveraging its position in CPA Programme and promoting partnership with organizations.

She stressed to encourage all national parliaments to emulate this strategy as guidance and ended her address with the following words:

***Diversity is not only in language, religion and culture but diversity is also in gender.***



### **Address by H.E. Dr. Arif Alvi, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan:**

Honourable President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi started his address by thanking the distinguished guests. He said that the goal of two days conference was evaluating methods of poverty eradication, looking at the impediments against women in politics, sustainable development and youth engagement. He remarked that these were the issues which were very important to global politics, especially for this region and Pakistan. He said that South Asia had three primary issues; poverty, health and education. If health and education were handled properly, poverty level shall automatically start reducing.



Mr. President emphasized on the international issues as well. He said that one of the important issues in international politics was that governments tend to ignore the disparity among people. He remarked that this disparity was being caused by the prevalent inequality and discrimination. In this regard, international politicians should understand how to handle the situation.

In addition to the challenges of inequality was xenophobia. People were valued differently and all humanity was not treated equal. Despite whatever the United Nations' Charter may say, all humanity was practically not equal. World looked at refugees with the lens of xenophobia. Yet Pakistan had set a great moral example to the world by hosting 3.5 million refugees. We still host a lot of them. He said that societies need to learn humanism and humanity first. Apart from

xenophobia, issues were compounded with islamophobia. People discriminate among each other on the basis of colour, race and religion.

He emphasized that while looking for the solution of a particular issue, one should first completely recognize the issue itself. Sometimes recognition of the issue is lacking while we move ahead with fencing the problem. Efforts should be made to identify problems individually.

He concluded by saying that satisfaction of people was in the satisfactory functioning of the parliament and government, only then could one have a future in which every citizen has a stake.

With this, he once again thanked all the guests and expressed his best wishes for the success of the conference.



## **First Plenary: Eradicating Poverty in South Asia**

The plenary on 'Eradicating Poverty in South Asia' commenced in the second half of the day one of the conference. Honourable Leader of the House in the Senate of Pakistan, Senator Shibli Faraz moderated / chaired the plenary, whereas, Dr. Sania Nishtar, the Chairperson BISP Programme and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Social Protection & Poverty Alleviation delivered the keynote address. Honourable Deputy Speaker of Parliament of Sri Lanka, Mr. Ananda Kumarasiri and Honourable Deputy Speaker of House of Representatives of Malaysia, Dato' Haji Mohd Rashid Bin Hasnon were also part of the panel and addresses the session.

The plenary started with recitation from the Holy Quran. Honourable Leader of the House in the Senate of Pakistan, Senator Shibli Faraz chaired and moderated the session.

### **Address by Senator Shibli Faraz, Leader of the House in the Senate**

In his opening remarks, Senator Shibli Faraz commended the Hon. Speaker National Assembly, Mr. Asad Qaiser for his initiative of holding the CPA Asia Conference and therein proving his vision of a unified, stable and prosperous region. He said that Poverty eradication was one of the most enduring obstacles faced by South Asia which hosted nearly one-fifth of the world's population. Despite a drop in poverty, South Asia was still home to 54 percent of the world's multidimensional poor. He shared that South Asia's economic growth had done little to remove inequalities in wealth and resource distribution and sharing incomes and human capital. He underscored the importance of a strong political will to mainstream socio-economic uplift and poverty reductions policies in development plans and budgets. He urged Members of CPA Asia Region to evolve joint strategies and frameworks of cooperation, share policy and legal interventions and build strong trade and economic partnerships to eradicate poverty in the region.



Informing the participants about the progress Pakistan had made in this regard, Senator Faraz shared that commitment to poverty alleviation remained a key focus. In this regard, the government has been taking initiatives to equitable development, equality, inclusivity, improved and accessible health and educational facilities, non-discrimination and good governance.

He was of the view that CPA's platform can help Member parliaments share and exchange expertise, knowledge and best practices in poverty eradication. In the end, he hoped to hearing participants' valuable suggestions and proposals to promote cooperation and friendship as a vehicle of peace and progress.

### **Address by Dr. Sania Nishtar, the Chairperson BISP Programme**

Dr. Sania Nishtar, the Chairperson BISP Programme and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Social Protection & Poverty Alleviation delivered the keynote address. Presenting the vision of the Honorable Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Imran Khan of a social welfare state, she gave a presentation of the recently launched initiative of "Ehsaas." Ehsaas is the Urdu word for feeling which means feeling for the disadvantaged, making sure that they are lifted out of poverty to create an equal opportunity for everyone.

She said that nationally 64.3% of the population of the country was labeled as income poor back in 2001-02 and from thereon it has been quite a remarkable journey because currently 24% of the population suffers from income poverty. She chose the proxy indicator of "stunting" to explain her presentation on poverty. As per last year data, 41% of the population still suffered from stunting in Pakistan. The



Ehsaas programme currently has 115 policy objectives. They are organized in four areas. It's a massive whole of government coordinated programme. 28 federal ministries and all the federating units of the government of Pakistan have responsibility for execution.

She highlighted that this government took unprecedented measures to further this agenda, subsequent to its adoption, a new ministry was created for poverty alleviation and social safety. Ehsaas is for the extreme poor, for orphans, for widows, for the homeless, for the disabled, for

those who risks medical impoverishments, for the jobless, for poor farmers, the laborers, for the sick who cannot afford, for the under nourished, for students from low income back grounds, for poor elderly citizens, for poor women and it is truly an unprecedented program because for the first time the welfare of people in the informal sector has been included in the matrix, for the first time unprecedented efforts are being taken to cater for the welfare of our millions of workers abroad and of course it is also about measures to lift lagging areas.

She concluded by saying that Government was making a number of different structural adjustments in order for the country to allow to go on that trajectory, but till such a time that it is unable to achieve that, safety nets will be very important component of Ehsaas and this is what is currently being prioritized. She ended her presentation with token of thanks for providing her with the opportunity.

**Address by Honorable J.M. Ananda Kumarasiri, MP, Deputy Speaker and the Chair of Committees, Leader of the Delegation:**

At the onset, he appreciated the wonderful arrangements CPA Branch of Pakistan had put in place to make the stay in Islamabad a memorable and comfortable one and especially thanked the Honourable Speaker for the generous hospitality extended to him and the Sri Lankan delegation.

He said that poverty remained a barrier for the development process around the world especially in South Asia. He remarked that efforts for poverty alleviation have been underway for many years now. One of these was the SAARC Plan of Action on Poverty Alleviation. However, still more than 200 million people were living on less than 1.9 dollars a day.



Highlighting the challenges in this regard, he pointed out high population growth, lack of human development, regional resource disparity, over reliance on agriculture and under development of non-agrarian sectors. Talking about Sri Lanka he highlighted that MDG target of halving poverty

at national level, successful Samurdhi Social Safety Programme, free education, health services and various social protection programs were key achievements over the years.

He concluded by saying that despite the many challenges faced, we need to put in robust checks and processes, educate, create awareness and rekindle hope. As elected representatives of the people, it was our responsibility to ensure that no citizen feels that the circumstances of their birth shall define the rest of their entire existence.

**Address by Honorable Deputy Speaker of the Provincial Assembly of Punjab, Sardar Dost Muhammad Mazari:**

At the onset, he expressed his sincere appreciation for the Honorable Speaker, Mr. Asad Qaiser for successful holding of the CPA Asia Conference in Islamabad. He remarked that poverty has been a consistent problem in the region and 33% of the world's poor lived in South Asia. There were different challenges of poverty reduction such as shortage of funds, lack of consistency in policies (policy shift with change in government), lack of exact record of poor people, growing population, poor monitoring and evaluation of pro-poor programmes, inflation, foreign debt, lack of foreign direct investment etc.

He appreciated the leadership for initiating the Ehsaas programme and said that it must be kept in mind that with the meager resources of the government, it cannot eliminate poverty alone. So, the role of the other actors was also very important.



**Address by Lord Purvis of Tweed, special guest from the House of Lords, United Kingdom:**

He thanked for the wonderful hospitality he received at the hands of the National Assembly of Pakistan. He chose to highlight the role that the UK could play as an equal partner within the family of the Commonwealth. He remarked that it was regrettable but nevertheless a fact that if you were born into the Commonwealth in the world today, you were twice as likely to be born into absolute poverty.

He said that there were opportunities in the commonwealth with which prosperity could flourish. Tackling the barriers to trade was one. The seven largest commonwealth developing countries, India, Nigeria, South Africa, Malaysia, Singapore, Pakistan and Bangladesh who see their



combined GDP rise from less than 4 trillion Dollars in 2013 to more than 10 trillion Dollars, is just about 50% of commonwealth GDP in 2030.

He remarked that in this era of IT innovation, massive opportunity existed for E-commerce and sharing deeper cooperation on information. Practical measures for reducing costs, time and risks related to investment, promoting business dialogues and maximizing the contribution of Foreign Direct Investment must also be looked into. He concluded by saying that there were many opportunities and we should not be faint hearted; we know that challenges are multi-dimensional and deeply complex. We have within our Commonwealth family many of the answers and we just need to share them and then act on them.



**Address by Special Guest, Honourable Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malaysia, Dato' Haji Mohd Rashid Bin Hasnon:**

He thanked and expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to address the plenary session. He quoted the Prophet (PBUH) and said that Muslim states must fight against poverty in all its ugly ramifications. Attempts should be made both at the individual and the collective levels to eradicate poverty. He remarked that Poverty could be a major impediment in the way of realizing the broad goals of the Islamic Shariah, which is the protection of *Deen*, protection of *Nafs*, protection of *Aqal*, *Nasab* and *Maal*.

He said that we have been blessed where for the past three decades, extreme poverty in the world has decreased significantly. We have started the year 2019 with the lowest count of extreme poverty ever recorded in human history. It is less than 10 percent globally and as for the Asia region, the average poverty rate is less than 3 per cent.



He added that poverty eradication needed a holistic solution. We must have data in statistics so that we can know where we are and what to do. One size fits all solution does not work for poverty alleviation. He mentioned that poverty in Malaysia was a large focus for the government and the community and they were working

together to solve this problem. However, role of legislators and parliaments for enacting facilitating laws was imperative to the process.

He highlighted the “Prosper-thy-Neighbour” policy of Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir and emphasized on the 4P theory, which referred to Public-Private-Professional-Partnership. He further suggested the formation of institutionalized zakat institution for poverty alleviation. In Malaysia, the model has been successful whereby those who pay Zakat get exemption from the income tax. So, the fund is helping the government at federal and provincial level. He concluded that there was great potential to make the system more useful and efficient to eradicate poverty in an organized manner.

**Address by Mr. Firdous Shamim Naqvi, Honourable Leader of the Opposition in the Sindh Assembly:**

He thanked for being invited to address the session. He shared the statistics from Sindh and said that 44 percent of children were stunted and the province lagged behind in SDGs. He appreciated the policies in vogue in Sri Lanka, Malaysia, UK and asked for their support in building Naya Pakistan.

He suggested that these conferences should be made more interactive and should be the basis for experience sharing.



***The plenary session ended on vote of thanks from the Chair.***





# DAY TWO:

31<sup>st</sup> July, 2019

- **The CWP Seminar:**  
*Challenges and Impediments against Women in Politics*
- **Youth Round Table:**  
*Making Democracy Relevant; Why is it Important to Recognize Young Voices?*
- **SDG's Panel Discussion:**  
*Parliamentary Partnerships for SDGs*



## **The CWP Seminar:**

### ***Challenges and Impediments against Women in Politics***

On 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019, WPC organized an interactive seminar on the four thematic areas namely: Prioritizing Women Issues as National Issues; The Push towards Backbenches in the House; the “General Seat” versus “Reserved Seat” Bias; and Male dominant Party Structure.

This powerful and thought-provoking activity was part of the 3-day conference of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA). The Conference’s theme was *Envisioning Parliamentary Paths towards a Diverse and Developed South Asia*. A sizeable number of parliamentarians from five countries including Pakistan assembled not only to determine structural and cultural patriarchy faced by women in politics but also to explore realistic solutions to expand their effective presence in politics.

Parliamentarians, as community leaders, are transformative changemakers and impact the lives of others. They are mandated to ensure development outcomes are efficient, effective, and achievable. However, the evolution of modern democracy and the political system has witnessed political isolation and exclusion for women. Women around the world face gender-based discrimination in both party nominations and key leadership roles. Gender discrimination in Parliaments and political parties need to be identified, challenged and reconstructed. Parliaments must adopt a gender-sensitive approach and act as a gold standard for other institutions to follow.

## **1.1 Aims and Objectives of CWP-WPC Seminar**

### **Aim:**

To create and strengthen an enabling environment for women’s empowerment for a sustainable, secure and fairer society that is free from violence and coercion.

### **Key Objectives:**

To create an important opportunity for learning by:

1. Articulating the need and relevance of gender equality and mainstreaming
2. Sharing best practices on augmenting women’s voices in legislatures
3. Recommending precise procedures and processes to advance the gender-responsiveness of parliaments

### **Expected Outcomes:**

1. An inclusive and diverse space shall be materialized with a focus on ensuring that marginalized voices are heard.
2. Ideas and strategies (on how governments can work together to support and improve opportunities for women becoming more involved in politics and decision-making processes) shall be generated.
3. Succinct but rich in content programme will disseminate valuable information.
4. Strategic networking opportunities shall be created.

### **1.2 Opening Session**

Dr. Fehmida Mirza, Member CWP Executive Committee and Patron of WPC, formally started the seminar by delivering her welcome address. This was followed by opening remarks of Ms. Munaza Hassan, Secretary WPC.

The programme of the seminar and bios of all panelists are included in Annexure section.

#### **Dr. Fehmida Mirza, Member Executive Committee CWP, Patron WPC & Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination**

Dr. Fehmida Mirza welcomed the distinguished foreign parliamentarians from the Commonwealth fraternity as well as the audience including legislators, members of civil society, academia, media and all other guests.

She described how Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) was formed in 2008 and how it has gone from strength to strength since then.

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*“Political parties should ensure women's participation at the decision making forums.”*

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Under her patronage, WPC brought about many legislative reforms including the Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, the Acid and Burn Crimes Act, and much needed election reforms pertaining to women. At least 10% of votes cast have to be of women otherwise the results would be void.

She explained that women's exclusion in the formal political processes is a result of multiple structural, institutional and functional obstacles that are present in the country. Political parties should ensure women's participation at the



*Dr. Fehmida Mirza delivering opening remarks*

decision making forums.

Moreover, she highlighted that during her Speakership, she ensured participation of women on backbenches and tried to reduce the disparity between women elected on reserved seats and those elected on general seats.

Dr. Mirza said that the deliberations of this seminar shall command the attention of CPA and build a transformative agenda for advancing gender equality, creating peaceful societies and removing structural patriarchy.

### **Ms. Munaza Hassan, Member Steering Committee CWP & Secretary WPC**

Ms. Munaza Hassan, in her opening remarks said that the 5<sup>th</sup> CPA Asia Regional Conference marked yet another milestone of continued collaboration between Pakistan national and provincial assemblies, CPA regional branches and the CPA secretariat.

She stated that there was a patriarchal consensus against women in leadership positions. She stated that every country required country-specific analysis and solutions to overcome barriers for women in politics. Many of the solutions are available through the SDGs.

Ms. Munaza Hassan underscored the importance of gender-responsive legislation and social protection programmes in empowering women in any society and state. She highlighted the renewed focus on improving health and happiness of women and girls.

She elaborated on how PTI's government aims to achieve the vision of 'New Pakistan' under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan. She marked this as the start of a new era, where the focus would be on eradicating corruption, and promoting human development. Furthermore, this era will ensure that underprivileged and marginalized segments of society are uplifted, and women play their rightful role in society.

She shared some salient features of some community-centered programmes introduced by PTI's government. The Prime Minister's National Social Protection Programme aims for social protection and financial security with the budget of 158 Billion Rupees.

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*“Inclusion of women in different disciplines including politics is still debated across the globe. There is a patriarchal consensus against women in leadership positions. We all need country-specific analysis and solutions to overcome barriers for women in politics.*

*Many solutions are possible through SDGs Gender-responsive legislation social protection programmes can definitely empower women in any society and state.”*

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**Ehsaas** is Pakistan’s biggest program for poverty eradication which aims to collaborate with all stakeholders—public, private, civil society, philanthropists, and expatriate Pakistanis towards one collective goal – poverty alleviation.

She also highlighted the widespread issue of child marriage, against which significant amendments are being planned to increase the effectiveness of the legislation.

Furthermore, she described how the current government of PTI is revolutionizing the justice system in order to protect inheritance rights of women and was establishing Gender Based Violence Courts at district levels.

She gave a brief overview of WPC’s activities as well.

She conveyed to the foreign dignitaries that the Pakistani parliament strongly believes in multilateralism and stands with the Commonwealth family of institutions.



*Ms. Munaza Hassan delivering the welcome address*

### 1.3 Technical Sessions

#### Session 1: Prioritizing Women’s Issues as National Issues

As women face various forms of discrimination based on gender, race, disability, gender identity and age, there is an inevitable need to focus on seeing and believing women issues as national issues. This requires active promotion of women’s leadership, economic empowerment and political participation in decision-making processes.

The first technical session aimed to discuss the ways and means on how to mainstream women's issues. The panel had the following notable speakers:



*Speaker of National Assembly*

1. Dr. Shireen Mazari, Federal Minister for Human Rights
2. Ms. Moneeza Hashmi, Women's Rights and Media Expert
3. Ms. Julia Bintu, MP Uganda

### **Dr. Shireen Mazari: Federal Minister for Human Rights**

Dr. Shireen Mazari stressed that any issue pertaining to women, minorities or any other marginalized segment of society should be treated as a national issue.

She highlighted that women in Pakistan are constricted by the notion 'what will people say?' which is reinforced from a very young age starting from the household. This flawed and stifling societal mindset leads to the discrimination of women and girls in various sectors including health, education, workplace, and politics.

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*"Empowerment of Women  
Starts with Women  
Empowering Themselves"*

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She emphasized that the empowerment of women starts with women empowering themselves. If mothers tolerate discrimination, it will be passed on the next generation.

Dr. Mazari pointed out that there already an abundance of laws for the protection of women in Pakistan. However, it is of utmost importance that the implementation of these laws is carried out. If these laws are to be effective, it is imperative that the change first comes from within families and households first.

Dr. Mazari expressed the need to change some of the existing laws that were obsolete and undermined women. She cited Article 10 of the Citizenship Act which disallowed a Pakistani woman from transferring her nationality to her non-Pakistani husband.

She shared some of the achievements of her ministry, including the awareness raising on child abuse. This was considered a taboo topic previously, but the campaign run by the Ministry of Human Rights was well-received in schools and by society at large. For the first time, the difference between good touch and bad touch can be discussed openly.

Another important point that Dr. Mazari raised was the need to have reliable disaggregated data on women. Progress on women's issues can only be effectively monitored if there is a strong baseline.



*Federal Minister for Human Rights Dr. Shireen Mazari addressing the audience*



Dr. Mazari highlighted the double standards of the western liberal countries who accuse Muslim countries such as Pakistan in suppressing the rights of women, while they themselves discriminating against Muslim women.

Dr. Mazari said Pakistan's Constitution - Article 25 (2) - specifically protected women from any kind of discrimination. Moreover, Pakistan is a signatory of many international agreements including the 2030 Development Agenda, CEDAW, and Beijing Platform for Action which aim to mainstreaming women in society.

There is a dire need of including women in policy discussions in areas such as foreign policy, defense, natural disasters and conflict management – areas which disproportionately affect women, but they are under-represented.

Dr. Mazari took exception to the quota system of reserved seats for women currently in place in Pakistan. She maintained that such a system was actually impeding the mainstreaming of women in political arena as they are not participating directly in the electoral process.

She urged the audience to start looking at societal issues through the human rights lens and not the gender lens.

### **Ms. Moneeza Hashmi: Media & Women Rights Expert**

Ms. Moneeza Hashmi highlighted that although a significant proportion of women in Pakistan face serious impediments and are denied basic rights, we as a society have come a long way, as at least we can openly discuss considering women issues as national issues. It is a long journey that has led us here.

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*“Media can be a tool to lead the change.”*

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Pakistani women have made tremendous progress in various fields in recent years; we have had a female Prime Minister, a Nobel Prize winner, an Oscar winner, fighter pilots, business tycoons, educationalists, political leaders and many more exceptional women achievers.

Ms. Hashmi said that it is not just the men or misogynist society which stand between women and progress, but the centuries old patriarchal mindset. This mindset sees empowered women as a threat to the existing power structure and is unwilling to see them in decision making positions as this would mean sharing power.

As a seasoned media practitioner, she proposed that media can be an instrumental tool to bring about change in societal mindsets and to increase space for women so that they fulfill their maximum potential and contribute even more. The need of the hour is to have a well-designed and well thought out media strategy taking into consideration all stakeholders aimed at protecting and upholding women's rights.

Ms. Hashmi concluded by saying that Rome was not built in a day. It takes persistent focused efforts and most importantly commitment, which is being manifested by this Seminar, to achieve our goal.

### **Ms. Jalia Bintu:MP Uganda**

Ms. Bintu said that in Uganda, traditional and cultural barriers discouraged women to participate in politics. These barriers emerge at a very young age as the girl child at a disadvantage as she is often not allowed to go to school and compete with the boy child.

There is a rule that at least 30% of Committees in Ugandan Parliament have to be led by women. The Speaker, Leader of Opposition, Chief Whip, Public Accounts Committee, Human Rights Committee, in addition social sectors – Education, health and gender – are all women in Uganda.

Women parliamentarians in Uganda have to fulfill multiple roles simultaneously - as legislators, representatives, and mothers - which makes it tougher for them to compete with their male counterparts. We are in the process of enacting electoral laws to remove certain barriers for women. Moreover, women face financial barriers to participate in politics.

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*“The Challenges faced by women in Uganda can be traced back to historic cultural norms and practices.”*

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In Uganda, a law has been passed which requires every bill, policy brought forward on the floor of the Parliament needs to be issued a certificate of gender equity. The government has to explain how the law will benefit women and much funds will be allocated towards them.

The Uganda Women’s Parliamentary Caucus for example refused the annual budget objecting that not enough was allocated towards reducing the maternal mortality rate. This objection was welcomed by the male parliamentarians and they increased funds allocated towards increasing the socio-economic conditions of women.

In Uganda, women parliamentarians also take their male counterparts on board and champion a pro-women agenda. We provide them with information, and they push for our reforms.

### **Concluding Remarks by Chair - Honourable Ms. Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, Deputy Speaker Parliament of Cameroon**

In Cameroon, women have to go through primaries and compete with men of their own political parties and then compete in general elections. Pakistani women are lucky to have reserved seats.

She thanked the Pakistani government on providing political space to Pakistani women. This shows willingness of men to ensure that voices of women are heard.

Women representation in national parliaments globally has incrementally increased from 11.8% in 1998, 17.8% in 2008 and 23.5% in 2018.

Persistent barriers for women otherwise known as gender inequalities. Access to resources is a big issue. Even if women have the resources, their resources are often not spent in politics as priorities are different.

Entering into politics is often a risk. As soon as a woman enters politics, their private life becomes public life. Women are held to a different standard compared to men.

Men should not feel threatened by women. We are not trying to go ahead of them. We just want to walk side by side with them.

Most political parties are owned by men. They take all the lucrative positions and sideline women. We have discriminatory laws that limit women's options to participate in politics. Even when women achieve leadership, they face discrimination, harassment and even violence.

She shared her personal experience of the problems she faced when she entered politics. Her own mother opposed her decision to enter politics as she feared that her children would be neglected.

The full and equitable participation of women in leadership in public life is essential to build strong and vibrant democracies. Women's political participation results in greater responsiveness to citizens' needs. It affects the choice of policy issues and types of solutions that are proposed.

Women leaders tend to work across party lines and prioritize health, education, nutrition, water and other key development indicators.

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*“Women’s political participation affects the choice of policy issues and types of solutions that are offered.”*

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*Closing Remarks by Honourable Chair*

## Session 2: The Push towards Backbenches in the House

As in many countries, politics in Pakistan is male-dominated, with men controlling the legislative agenda and marginalizing women party members. Due to such hindrances, women parliamentarians struggle to represent the interests of women and other constituencies and find it difficult to effectively articulate progressive policy agendas.

The second technical session discussed the important contributions of women legislators and deliberated on how to further increase their role so that they are not confined to the backbenches.

This session had the following panelists:

- |   |                                     |                                      |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Honourable Ms. Rehana Leghari       | Deputy Speaker, Sindh Assembly       |
| 2 | Honourable Dr. Aisha Ghaus Pasha    | MNA                                  |
| 3 | Honourable Ms. Kishwar Zehra        | MNA                                  |
| 4 | Honourable Mr. Firdous Shamim Naqvi | Leader of Opposition, Sindh Assembly |

### Ms. Kishwar Zehra, MNA

Ms. Zehra cited the important role of women in Islamic history and gave examples from Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) life on how he raised the status of women in a society that treated them like commodities and articles of trade with minimal rights.

She then highlighted the important role that women played in the creation of Pakistan by citing Muhatarma Fatima Jinnah who made numerous sacrifices and became a pillar of strength for his brother and founder of Pakistan Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Ms. Zehra proposed a global caucus for women, where parliamentarians from all countries can work together towards the common goal of uplifting women. She expressed that women are



*Panelists of Second technical session*

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*"Women are symbols of peace and can play a positive role in resolving global conflicts by joining hands."*

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symbols of peace and that they can play a positive role in resolving global conflicts by joining hands.

### **Ms. Rehana Leghari: Deputy, Speaker Sindh Assembly**

Ms. Leghari contested that the statement that women were being pushed towards the backbenches was not entirely true. She cited her own example of being the only woman Deputy Speaker in Pakistan.

According to independent research on women's legislative performance, in the last ten years Sindh passed the most progressive pieces of legislation. Moreover, women MPAs account for more than 75% of the legislative business of the Sindh Provincial Assembly. Women MPAs' attendance in the Provincial Assembly as well as its Committees always exceeds that of its male counterparts.

She, however, did highlight the various issues faced by women MPAs in Sindh. The Women's Parliamentary Caucus in Sindh is not a fully recognized body and hence does not have the resources to thrive.

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*“Women MPAs account for than 75% of the legislative business of the Sindh Assembly.”*

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Moreover, women MPAs face human resource challenges and are not getting the required Secretariat support to carry out their parliamentary business. There is a need for research support as well as capacity building.

Ms. Leghari also pointed out that the resources to graduate from reserved seats to general seats were also lacking, which is another important barrier faced by women in politics.

She urged CPA and other international organizations and networks to come forward in helping the women parliamentarians through capacity building.

### **Dr. Ayesha Ghaus Pasha, MNA**

Dr. Pasha emphasized that no society can achieve social, economic or political transformation if it excludes half of its population. According to UNDP's Gender Quality Index 2017, Pakistan ranks 133 out of 189 countries.

We have enhanced political participation through affirmative action. Pakistan has 20% of women representation in Assemblies as opposed to 11.6% in India. However, the critical question is whether this increased participation is translating into effective action

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*“Unfortunately, the role of women in Assemblies has been confined to ensuring quorum and to cheer for male party leaders.”*

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towards reducing inequalities. The answer is no, as reflected by multiple indicators such as the one mentioned before.

Most women in Pakistan are elected for the first time and hence are sidelined as ‘backbenchers’. They do not have the influence, lack knowledge and parliamentary experience. They are unable to make linkages. Unfortunately, the role of women in Assemblies has been confined to ensuring quorum and to cheer for male party leaders. The attitude of the bureaucracy towards female backbenches is also not encouraging.

We can learn from The House of Commons that made certain decisions to improve procedures and rules to enhance participation of backbenches in 2009. The backbenchers’ legislative business was not left at the disposal of ministries, but was instead assigned to the House, through the Speaker. Moreover, backbenchers are assigned one day in a week in which they could move Bills.

However, such measures alone cannot ensure that the attention of party leaders and the media is captured. The answer to the problem is to mainstream women.

Backbenchers are full of zeal. They are here to make a difference, but our forums are not letting them make a difference. Women in particular need to participate actively in standing committees as this is forum where they can make their presence felt. There should be a quota for women who chair and participate in the Sub-Committees.

The need of the hour is for women to adopt **Strategic Essentialism**, whereby they transcend partisan, ethnic, and cultural differences and work towards a common pro-women agenda. Women should undertake horizontal and vertical integration with various stakeholders on the basis of issues. There has to be an impetus to move women from political participation to substantive representation.

### **Mr. Firdous Shamim Naqvi MPA & Leader of Opposition, Sindh Assembly**

Mr. Naqvi pointed out that there are no specific impediments that need to be removed, but instead there is a discriminatory mindset found worldwide that needs to be combatted.

He articulated the need to set clear objectives, with specific timeframes, with resources allocated accordingly. Progress should be measured through the rights tools. Success needs to be defined. For example, success can be that the likelihood of women getting elected on a direct seat is equivalent to that for a man.

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*“There should be clear objectives, with specific timeframes, and resources allocated accordingly.”*

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He said that in his experience as a legislator, he has found women to be more competent and hardworking compared to men. However, women do not receive the respect they deserve in majority of households in the country due to a lack of enlightenment.

### Session 3: The “General Seat” vs “Reserved Seat” Bias

Although Pakistan has a high level of women’s representation in governing bodies through reserved seats, currently ranking 49<sup>th</sup> in the world, this numerical strength has neither translated into women having decision-making power nor serving as key policymakers.

The third technical session discussed substantive ways on how to enhance women’s role in the political process, and had the following distinguished panellists:

- |   |                                  |   |
|---|----------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Honourable Mr. Shah Ghulam Qadir | Speaker, Legislative Assembly of AJK    |
| 2 | Honourable Ms. Zubaida Jalal     | Federal Minister for Defence Production |
| 3 | Ms. Rukhshanda Naz               | Ombudsperson, Government of KP          |

#### Mr. Shah Ghulam Qadir, Speaker legislative Assembly, AJK

Mr. Qadir expressed his concerns regarding the nomination of women for reserved seats. He stated that women legislators in Pakistan are mostly awarded reserved seats on the basis of their relationship with the party leadership instead of their own merit or talents. Moreover, mostly these women come from privileged backgrounds denying the political workers the opportunity to be part of Assemblies.

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*“Women legislators in Pakistan are mostly awarded reserved seats on the basis of their relationship with the party leadership instead of their own merits or talents.”*

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He said that in AJK, there was only one woman legislator that was directly elected, and that too after winning on reserved seat for four terms.

#### Ms. Zubaida Jalal, Federal Minister for Defence Productions

Ms. Jalal emphasized that having women in the political process, whether on general seats or reserved seats, was very important. Moreover, she added that the only way to truly empower women is through education, especially those residing in rural areas. Education

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*“There should be a law that ensures that women parliamentarians are free to use development funds as they choose.”*

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enables women to break taboos and live their best lives.

She gave an account of her personal inspiring struggle of running and winning on a general seat from Balochistan province including an anecdote of campaigning while she was pregnant.

Ms. Jalal pointed out certain drawbacks in the current political system of Pakistan. She elaborated that women parliamentarians, especially those on reserved seats, are often not given development funds. Instead funds are instead channeled to their male counterparts higher up in the political hierarchy. This prohibits women parliamentarians from standing on their own and developing a relationship with the people they represent. Hence, she proposed that there should be a rule according to which development funds are allocated to women parliamentarians who are free to use them as they wish.



*Federal Minister for Defense Production Ms. Zubaida Jalal addressing the audience during the third technical session*

Similarly, she pointed out shortcomings in the directive of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), according to which all parties are required to award 5% of their party tickets to women on general seats. Ms. Jalal very pertinently pointed out that this rule was being exploited as parties were awarding tickets to women in those areas where they knew their candidate would lose.

### **Ms. Rukhshanda Naz, Ombudswoman, Government of KP & Women Rights Expert**

Ms. Naz pointed out that women elected on reserved seats are considered lesser than those elected on general seats as do not have a constituency. Moreover, they are often considered for party tickets on general seats, as they are told by their male counterparts to contest for reserved seats instead.

Furthermore, Ms. Naz highlighted the lack of media coverage for women candidates. She provided insightful statistics on airtime given to women candidates contesting the general elections of 2018 on various TV channels. She said that even the national broadcaster, PTV, gave only 4% of airtime to women candidates, which was less than some private channels (ARY – 5%, Express TV -7%).

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*“Women on reserved seats are considered lesser than those elected on general seats as they do not have a constituency.”*

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She commended the increase in women's representation in Assemblies at the National and Provincial levels. She pointed out that there were only 2 women in Pakistan's first Constituent Assembly, whereas now there are 21% of women represented in all Assemblies. She proposed that there should be special seats reserved for women where they contested against each other in direct elections on general seats. This would increase the capacity of women parliamentarians and make them well-versed in the electoral process.

#### Session 4: Male Dominant Party Structure

Research suggests that the presence of women leaders has a positive impact on governance, reputation, financial success and further encourages other women to become leaders. However, political parties in Pakistan are dominated by a patriarchal culture, which often does not allow women to come forward in leadership positions.

The fourth panel discussed how political parties can be made more inclusive so that more women can emerge in leadership positions. This session had the following panelists:

- |   |                                      |                                  |
|---|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Honourable Ms. Romina Khursheed Alam | MNA                              |
| 2 | Honourable Ms. Nadia Sher            | MPA, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly |
| 3 | Dr. Salma Malik                      | Academic & Author                |

#### Ms. Romina Khursheed Alam:MNA & Treasurer WPC

Ms. Alam shed light on her struggle of gaining prominence from humble beginnings. She described her journey from being a non-Muslim backbencher to a notable and productive member of her party PML-N. She urged all women to take inspiration from her example and tap into their inner strength. Women are naturally endowed with the ability to multitask as they have to carry out multiple roles simultaneously.

There is still room for women to leave a mark on politics by working hard and overcoming all kinds of obstacles including limited financing, patriarchal culture of political parties and others.

She emphasized the need for women parliamentarians to raise voices for each other. She

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*"Women need to raise their voices for each other and stand together."*

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Panelist Ms. Romina Khurshid Alam addressing the audience during the fourth technical session

said that together women can make a big difference.

**Ms. Nadia Sher: MPA, KP Assembly**

PTI has always been a party of women from the beginning. PTI came in power in KP in the last term, which is a conservative region dominated by men. As seen in the *dharnas*, there has been a willingness by women to participate in politics and civic life.

The first Deputy Speaker of the country was in PTI's last term, Dr. Mehr Taj Roghani. She pointed out that she herself was appointed the Parliamentary Secretary for Chief Minister KP for Home and Tribal Affairs, a position that had previously been occupied only by men.

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*"We need to stand up for ourselves and not rely on others."*

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Ms. Sher stressed women to stand for themselves, and not to rely only on discussion and seminars to get their rights.

**Dr. Salma Malik, Peace & Security Expert**

There is constant struggle for women to break the glass ceiling and to prove that they are no less than men. Women are constantly donning different hats. Especially for women parliamentarians, it's a 24/7 job unlike other jobs.

Dr. Malik explained that there is a difference in achieving equality and equity. First women in Pakistan should achieve equity, and then aspire for equality.

She also commented that political parties in Pakistan are endocentric, stereotypical and male dominated. Moreover, women are mocked on national television. They are subject to ridicule by their male counterparts.

Out of total population of women, we only have 10 million women who carry a CNIC and hence are eligible to vote. According to ECP figures, 35% of eligible women did not vote as opposed to 10% in the 2018 general elections. There is a critical mass deficit which needs to be covered.

Our party structures require reforms and have to become more inclusive. We had no women representation not very long ago, but now we have 21%.

Finally, she stressed the need for women to not only be looking at gender issues; instead they should be looking at all types of issues including security, peace and conflict resolution.

**The seminar ended with the exchange of souvenirs and vote of thanks, followed by lunch.**

## Analysis of the Seminar and Way Forward

### 2.1 Evaluation of Seminar

The seminar was well-received overall and gained traction on electronic and social media. There were a total of 121 attendees from various walks of life including the development sector, diplomatic community, academia, civil society and media. Based on the written evaluation gathered through evaluation proformas; 35% of respondents rated the event as “excellent” while the remaining 65% rated it as “good”. Moreover, 65% of the respondents identified “Prioritizing Women’s Issues as National Issues” as the most engaging technical session followed by “The Push towards Back-benches in the House” (24%).

Many audience members mostly women highlighted the overarching importance of empowering women in Pakistan, and particularly highlighted the need and relevance for capacity building of women in politics. The participation of visiting foreign parliamentarians was greatly appreciated, as their presence considerably enhanced the profile of the event.

Audience members remarked how advocacy, communication, and proper data collection will be vital in transforming societal attitudes towards women. The role of media will be instrumental in this regard.

Recommendations for the betterment of the event included the following:

- Strict timekeeping and/or shorter sessions
- Greater participation from male Parliamentarians
- Greater representation of people from rural backgrounds and disabled persons;
- More events such as these should be held in the future.

### Feedback:

“We are entering a new era. I firmly believe that by promoting female legislators we will essentially be working towards a better Pakistan.”

**Ms. Saira Bano, MNA**

“Excellent selection of speakers, as well as excellent programme and arrangements.”

**Ms. Nafeesa Inayat Ullah Khattak, MNA**

“The challenges facing women are daunting but not impossible to overcome. There should be more programmes for women awareness.”

**Senator Seemi Ezdi**

“Women empowerment begins with women empowering themselves without discrimination on the basis of gender. More such events should be held.”

**Ms. Shams-un-Nisa, MNA**

## 2.2 Where do we go from here?

The indicators of success of this seminar included but are not limited to attendance, degree and quality of participation and dialogue and social media engagement. This forum shaped an enabling and energizing environment that ensured candid conversations and difficult dialogues on sensitive issues.

A sizeable number of experts, leaders, mentors, influencers, learners and facilitators from different walks of life got connected thus impressively broadening the spectrum and scale of this learning forum. Not only the need and relevance of gender equality and mainstreaming was articulated loudly in different deliberations, but diplomacies, devices and discretion were also spelled out.

A consensus was built on the value of continuously communicating best practices on amplifying women's voices in legislatures and gender-responsiveness of parliaments towards national development.

Inclusion of women in policy discussions on areas where they are traditionally underrepresented is not a societal or social kindness but a technical necessity for progress of Pakistan on human development and gender inequality indices.

Uganda provided a best practice where at least 30% of Committees in Ugandan Parliament have to be led by female parliamentarians. Uganda has a law that requires every Bill that is presented, or policy introduced on the Floor of the House needs to explain how it benefits women and needs to be issued a 'Certificate of Gender Equity.

Effective implementation of existing laws on protection of women and to upgradation of existing laws which undermine women's rights supplemented with a well-designed and well thought out

Number of thematic areas (panel discussions)	4
Number of women legislators who participated as panelists	11
Number of countries represented	3
Number of political parties represented in panels	6
Total number of Participants	121
Number of CSOs, diplomats, academicians in attendance	78
Number of women Parliamentarians who attended seminar	18



gender sensitive media strategy are needed for protecting women's rights and mainstreaming them.

Pakistan needs more political participation of its women through added and effectual affirmative action; so that reduction in gender inequalities could be visible. There is a critical deficit in the number of women that cast their vote. Political parties require major reforms to make them more inclusive and representative. The 5% rule introduced by ECP is being exploited as parties often award tickets to women on those seats, which they are likely to lose on. Women candidates running for elections are not given sufficient airtime compared to their male counterparts. For instance:

- a) A quota for women in Sub-Committees, as Chairwomen and as participants may be allocated*
- b) Backbenchers quite often lack influence, knowledge and experience. Their skills and information base can be enhanced through structured capacity building exercises. Customized and context-specific adoption of best practices from other countries such as U.K can be adopted to ensure backbenchers receive the attention they deserve.*
- c) Reserved seats should be awarded to genuine political workers on merit and not based on relationship to the party leadership.*
- d) There should be a law which ensures that women parliamentarians on both general and reserved seats are given development funds and are free to invest on issues they resonate with.*
- e) Women should have special quota where they could contest direct elections against other women.*

Powerful and passionate messages by all distinguished speakers and participants provided as a pedestal with an invigorated focus on the issues of people. Strategic calls for action to expand involvement, representation and accomplishment of women in politics and parliament are summarized as follows:

- 1) Eliminate all barriers to women's participation in politics:** Women parliamentarians face numerous resource and capacity challenges which put them at a disadvantage compared to their male counterparts. These challenges primarily rooted in structural and cultural patriarchal need to be defeated in to ensure the participation and presence of women in politics and parliaments. Women, when provided the opportunity, excel in leadership roles in politics. Women have and continue to contribute in the legislative business in Pakistan. In fact, they dominate the legislative business in the Sindh Provincial Assembly.
- 2) Work with men for pro-women legislation and enabling environment:** To champion certain causes of national importance, to get gender sensitive outcomes and social inclusiveness, it is inevitable to work with fellow male parliamentarians and politicians.

- 3) Initiate an international women's caucus:** This idea if materialized could give greater visibility and connectedness to women in parliaments where women parliamentarians from all over the world can work towards the common goal of uplifting women.

In conclusion, it was an inclusive forum where representatives of people emerged as their voice and served as power of the powerless. It is hoped that learnings from this important seminar will be applied by all legislators, in their specific contexts.



## Youth Round Table:

### ***Making Democracy Relevant; Why is it Important to Recognize Young Voices?***

#### **Introduction**

Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services and National Assembly's Young Parliamentarians' Forum (YPF) organized Youth Roundtable – “Making Democracy relevant, recognizing the significance of youth voices” on Wednesday July 31, 2019 at Serena Hotel Islamabad. Held under the rubric of the 5<sup>th</sup> CPA Asia Region Conference, the Roundtable was attended by around 150 participants including international delegates from Sri Lanka and United Kingdom, Members of Parliament from National as well as Provincial and Legislative Assemblies, Youth Representatives, Parliamentary officials from National Assembly and PIPS, and media representatives. The proceedings began with the recitation of verses from Holy Quran.

- ✓ **Executive Director PIPS, Mr. Muhammad Rashid Mafzool Zaka**, moderated the Roundtable.
- ✓ **Honorable Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan, Mr. Asad Qaiser** graced the occasion as Chief Guest.
- ✓ **Secretary General Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Mr. Akbar Khan** chaired the event.

#### **Keynote Address**

##### **Honorable Senator Azam Swati, Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs**

On behalf of the Parliament and Government of Pakistan Honorable Senator Azam Swati welcomed the participants. He lauded the efforts of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in promoting dialogue and cooperation among the member countries across the globe.

Taking exception to the potential vested in youth he said that youth can make difference in democratic norms. Pakistan is especially blessed in terms of having significant portion of young population in its demographic composition. He emphasized the importance of youth over the technology which is often perceived as the driving force behind change in the world. He expressed hope that the youth can take Parliament to the second stage. He ended by emphasizing the importance of human resource over natural resources.



## SESSION – I

### Themes:

- *Youth as building blocks of inclusive democracy*
- *Youth platforms as stepping stone to the Parliament*

### Remarks by the Chair

#### Mr. Akbar Khan, Secretary General CPA

He welcomed the participants and lauded the generous hospitality offered by Pakistan and the Asia Branch extended towards the international delegates. He thanked Executive Director PIPS for putting efforts in organizing the Youth Roundtable. He said that CPA values the participation of 180 branches spread among the 58 member countries, representing nine regions of commonwealth world. The participation of CPA branches enriches and strengthens our common world. Those among us who are change-makers, the leaders, the young parliamentarians who are part of democratic governments, always support the voice of young people in decision making. He accosted the distinguished members of Parliaments and asked them to play an instrumental role in making governance more inclusive, transparent and accountable in Asia. He said that CPA believes that all Parliaments have elements of excellence, and all legislators are cornerstone of functioning democracy.

He underscored the importance of Commonwealth Charter and highlighted the values cherished by the Commonwealth community including but not limited to human rights, rule of law, international peace and security, gender equality and the role of youth. The Charter specifically



recognizes the positive role and contribution of young people in promoting development, peace, democracy and protecting our values. He emphasized that the future of our Commonwealth and upholding of our values rest with young people.

He laid emphasis on developing the institution of Youth Parliament for building inclusive and effective Parliament. The Asian region hosts large number of young people. In Bangladesh, there are 1.5 million people between ages of 15 and 35 years which equates to approximately 40% of entire population. Pakistan has 119 million young people, which comprise 60% of the population. The average age of Parliamentarians in Pakistan is 51 years. According to IPU, young people under 30 years of age constitute half of the population of the world, and only 2% of them are represented in the Parliaments.

He said that there is a need to explore the link between political participation and extremism. Institutions vested with the responsibility to make policies for youth need to be more accessible and inclusive for youth. Parliament must take the lead as it bears essential place in our society. Technology plays a very important role in accessing public places. He emphasized that by including young voices in decision making, we can ensure better life style and improve livelihood of masses.

Referring to the UNDP statistics, he said that 600 million young people are living in fragile conditions around the world. The adoption of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals can help address the situation. Around one third of the SDGs are related to young people. He said that through active engagement, young people can act as catalyst for SDGs. He lauded the efforts of National Assembly and the Young Parliamentarians' Forum in this regard.

## **PANEL DISCUSSION**

### **Ali Hameed**

He began by stating that youth is building block of democracy. This is true in terms of both potential and demographics. South Asia has eight states, six state religions, one fourth of world's population and all countries have one common factor i.e. youth and the youth bulge. Youth is an asset and it is high time we talk about utilizing this asset before it becomes a liability. He emphasized that youth inclusion should not just be ceremonial, it should be substantial. He appreciated the Young Parliamentarians' Forum and suggested that young researchers, activists and practitioners should be given representation in Standing Committees and National Assembly.

Regretting the ban on student unions, he said that they were once nurseries for the future political leadership. It is high time that political parties encourage youth participation and restore student unions. At the same time he also denounced the exploitation of existing non-functional unions at the hands of political parties in a violent or semi-violent manner. He said that it is high time to discuss and talk about meaningful engagement of youth and carry out legislation that gives youth opportunities for active and meaningful engagement. He also hinted towards reserved seats for youth in Parliament on the pattern of women reserved seats.



## **Shezreh Mirza**

Ms. Shezreh Mirza thanked the Secretary General CPA and the entire CPA for promoting and encouraging youth. She specifically lauded the platform of Youth Parliament established under the CPA. She said that according to the UNDP National Human Development Report of 2017, Pakistan's population is 200 million. Almost 64% of the entire population is below the age of 30, and roughly 44% of the electorate comprises of youth. She highlighted the efforts of incumbent political party for enhancing the youth representation in the political process.

She said that the electoral reforms of 2017 mandated that all political parties should give 10% of tickets to women in order to contest the general elections. She suggested such reforms for youth as well, saying that at least 10-20% should be given to youth from the age of 25-40.

She seconded the proposal put forward by Ali Hameed about student union, saying that they have been banned since 35 years which has given rise to unregulated platforms. Consequently, youth has found refuge in various groups on the basis of religion and ethnicity, which has created divisions rather than unity and constructive dialogue. She appreciated the internship opportunities for youth provided by the National Assembly.

## **Danish Ali Bhutto**

Mr. Danish Ali Bhutto began by putting forward some facts regarding youth. He mentioned that despite youth under 30 years of age constituting 50% of the population is underrepresented in the global parliaments and the Parliament of Pakistan is no different. 262 million children are out of school all over the world out of which 87 million are in conflict or disaster stricken areas. 22 million children are out of school in Pakistan alone which is a breach of their constitutional right under the article 25A. He also presented the upsetting fact that while 70 million youth are unemployed; 152 million young children are victims of child labor. He mentioned that 500 million youth are living in extreme poverty. Such disgruntled youth is potential target of exploitation by extremist groups and are easy to be recruited for terrorist activities.

He said that these facts make him strongly believes that youth is more like crumbling blocks rather than building blocks of democracy. He emphasized that policy making is non-participatory and non-inclusive. In 180 parliaments of the world only 920 i.e. 2% of the members are under 30. In Pakistan's National Assembly only four MNAs are under the age of 30 which supports the notion that youth is underrepresented.

He said that if one does not come from a political family the idea of becoming a politician is frowned upon which is detrimental for democracy. He stressed on the dire need of curriculum reform to ensure that dictatorship is by no means glorified. He said that educational institutions do not encourage healthy political discussions thus preventing political awareness and development of leadership skills. He put forth the suggestion of making Parliamentary Studies a mandatory subject. He also stressed necessity of removal of ban from student unions and civic

education to ensure informed voters. He also suggested that frequent interaction between youth and parliamentarians can catalyze youth's interest and participation in politics. He also put forth the recommendation to establish Youth Parliament under the patronage of the Parliament.

### **Honorable Shaza Fatima Khwaja, MNA**

Honorable Shaza Fatima Khwaja became the member of National Assembly of Pakistan for the first time in 2013 and was the youngest parliamentarian at the age of 25. In this capacity, she has also served as the Secretary General of Young Parliamentarians Forum. Talking on the issue of youth inclusion in politics she expressed her views that globally young MPs face the dilemma of not being taken seriously by the older and more experienced politicians and their opinions are not given due importance merely due to their age.

She stressed the need to include youth in policy making not because they form majority of the population nationally as well as globally but because how the world has changed drastically especially in the last decade. The world turning into global village has led to emergence of new challenges and opportunities. It is imperative to give youth the chance to become part of policy making and make effective use of new tools and technology to tackle these challenges.

Ms. Shaza highlighted that during the tenure of last government the young MPs proved themselves to be worthy of inclusion in policy making. MPs under 40 held important decision making positions in the cabinet and as parliamentary secretaries. Young MPs proved their competence by successfully heading 5 largest social sector development initiatives.

- First ever Parliamentary SDGs Secretariat, led by Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb
- Prime Minister's focal person on polio vaccination, Ms. Ayesha Raza Farooq
- Young Parliamentarians' Forum, led by Ms. Shaza Fatima Khwaja
- Prime Minister youth program, led by Ms. Leila Khan
- Benazir Income Support Program, led by Ms. Marvi Memon

Ms. Shaza highlighted that Young MPs used the platform of YPF to highlight not only the concerns of the youth but they utilized the forum to raise the plight of Kashmiris, raised gender related issues especially advocating the case of trans-gender people and gender inclusiveness through international conferences and public hearings.

She also put forth the recommendation to replicate YPF model in CPA and other Commonwealth countries. She further elaborated the purpose and working of YPF, where young MPs irrespective of their political affiliation come up with effective legislation especially for Youth. She also mentioned her interaction with youth in universities through YPF. She said with pride that she discovered the youth to be capable of holding intelligent and meaningful debate on important issues like minority rights, climate change and transgender rights.

### **Honorable Mahmood Jan, Deputy Speaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly**

The Honorable Deputy Speaker opened his discussion by thanking the organizers for inviting him and giving him the opportunity to speak on such an important issue. He stated that currently 64 percent of the nation is within the age bracket of 15 and 29 years of age. This means that Pakistan now has more young people than we ever had, and this situation will remain, as has been forecasted at least, until 2050. He affirmed, Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf's belief in the potential of young blood and has come into power mainly because of support of youth of this country. He mentioned that PTI has set the trend of efficient and effective Youth wings instead of Student Unions and well above the meager slogans of zindabad and murdabad which was the trend of the past amongst youth student unions. He stated that PTI has given way to youth of today that belong from different class background to become our future leaders and are given the chance to learn about politics and eventually become part of the Parliaments.

The Honorable Deputy Speaker stated that in the aftermath of General Elections 2018, one third of KP Assembly comprises of young and new faces from diverse backgrounds while 11 of them are under the age of 30 involving 10 members from PTI which is an achievement in itself. These young faces have been encouraged to take on decision making positions as cabinet members and as Chairpersons of Standing Committees of health, social welfares and tourism.

He emphasized that PTI has the mandate of the youth and is actively legislating to come up with policies and solutions to the problems pertaining to youth. He stated that the PTI government in KP Assembly recently passed the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Youth Development and Commission Act 2018, that gives vision, direction and a roadmap for the development of youth and their social, economic and political life in the Province.

He mentioned the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Youth Endowment Fund Act, 2019 to support and encourage business startups and entrepreneurship by youth of the province, in order to help them build a professional life in the society. Third milestone achievement of KP Assembly has been the enactment of The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Youth Affairs Management and Disposal of Immovable Properties Act 2019. He concluded the KP Assembly is and will continue to do more for the youth and also give way to them to play a vital role in the politics of Pakistan and the Province.

#### **Honorable Dost Muhammad Mazari, Deputy Speaker Punjab Assembly**

The Honorable Deputy Speaker opened his discussion by welcoming the foreign dignitaries that have come to Pakistan to attend the 5<sup>th</sup> CPA Asia Regional Conference and thanked the organizers for inviting him to attend this conference and honored him to speak on such an important issue. He said that the youth is the backbone of the nation, as they can play an important role in the development of the country. He said that in a democratic process effective participation of youth is very vital.

He stated that the population of south Asia is almost 30% of the entire world, but the youth representation in South Asia is not fully utilized as compared to other continents. The youth in

South Asian countries is confronting issues like lack of proper education, employment, basic facilities, and absence of consulting and training. It is important to address such issues because such a bleak situation for youth generally creates unrest and gives way to different trends, such as suicide, robbery and extremism.

He said that there are various studies that indicate a relationship between youth bulge of the country and civil strike and security unrest in the places. He said we need to engage youth in the mainstream and progressive politics by taking different measures. We must provide cheap and quality education to all the citizens along with the provision of jobs and cater for equal opportunities for all without any discrimination.

He said that in order to enhance youth's political participation, their voices should be given due weightage. In this regard, there are different youth parliaments working in Pakistan training youth about democracy and parliamentary affairs. He appreciated the role of British Council 'Subai' project, which has employed young talented people in the provincial Assemblies of Pakistan and through this program many young people have got the opportunity to participate in the parliamentary processes.

He said that we hope that in the near future the number of such programs would be increased so that large number of young people can be made part of the democratic process. He said that the Honorable Prime Minister has always given importance to the youth and supported them in many ways. In this regard 'Wazeer-e-Azam Kamyab Jawan' program is an example appreciated for the welfare of the youth. He said that the PTI government is committed to provide more initiative for the development of youth. In his concluding remarks he appreciated the efforts of CPA and thanked the Honorable Speaker of the National Assembly for all the initiatives taken for youth development in Pakistan.

### **Honorable Heshan Withanage, MP Sri Lanka**

The Honorable Member Parliament, Sri Lanka opened his discussion by thanking the Government of Pakistan and the organizers for inviting him and giving him opportunity to speak on such an important issue. He extended his appreciation towards the CPA secretariat on behalf of the Parliament of Sri Lanka for organizing such an important event.

He stated that Sri Lanka has population around 21.5 million and its per capita income is 4073 US dollars. He stated that Sri Lanka has been involved in a twenty five year long armed conflict that ended in 2009. Sri Lanka's economy grew at an average of 6.4 percent during 2010 to 2015. The unemployment rate was 4.2% in 2017 and the poverty headcount index was 4.1%.

He stated that Sri Lanka is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country. In the wake of 30 years armed conflict in the country young people paid a great price as Sri Lanka lost a large number of precious young lives during the three-decade long armed conflict.

He stated that the Government of Sri Lanka has initiated several projects for the benefit of the future generation of the country. The world's young population is around 1.8 billion between the ages of 15 and 29. South Asia alone accounts for 26% of this global youth, with 22% of Sri Lanka's own population between the ages of 15 and 29.

He stated that the young people should be engaged for working towards changing the world that directly affect their lives, by inviting young people to speak with the policy makers so that youth voice can be incorporated into key socio-economic policies.

Moreover, young people use digital spaces to engage in political and democratic activities. We must listen to them and their voices should be given due weightage. Such an approach would pave the way for good governance.

He stated that he believed that young people have the highest potential to contribute in achieving sustainable development goals. However, it is only possible when they are given an equal and fair opportunity in every field including politics, sports, education, employment, and entrepreneurship, etc. and their inclusion is very important.

#### Q&A SESSION

**Mr. Akbar Khan:** summed up the discussion by highlighting the key suggestions/areas of focus put forward by the panelists. These included:

- ✓ the importance placed on the role of student unions,
- ✓ electoral reforms for raising the voice of youth, and
- ✓ the establishment of youth development commissions in order to come up with south youth policies.

He emphasized merely increasing the number is desired, the crux lies in enhancing the contribution of youth in the decision making process.

**Mr. Muhammad Rashid Mafzool Zaka:** apprised the participants that the ongoing ban on student unions primarily emanates from a judicial decision rather than any legislative instrument. He highlighted the enactment of Civic Education Bill which came about in 2018 with the objective to enhance civic education among the masses. He expressed the hope that if implemented in letter and spirit, the legislation can play significant role in imparting civic training especially for youth. He also mentioned some other initiatives of the Parliament of Pakistan aimed at providing awareness about the parliamentary system, including the launch of parliamentary studies program in 22 universities across Pakistan. Consequently, four years' BS (Hon.) in Parliamentary Studies has also been started. He asked from the panelists that what is your take regarding sports and its relationship with the youth?

**Mr. Danish Ali Bhutto:** appreciated the enactment of the Civic Education Bill. However, he said that the challenge lies in its implementation. Many bills have earlier been passed, but they could not produce the desired results due to lack of implementation. He lamented the decision of the

Supreme Court pertaining to student unions, and said that we are producing graduates but not politicians.

**Hon. Shaza Fatima Khawaja:** took note of the judicial decision pertaining to student unions and recommended that young lawyers should take up the matter with the judiciary in order to lift ban on student unions. Deliberating on the Civic Education Bill she said that it took three years to conclude the legislation. Disagreeing with Mr. Bhutto regarding implementation of the Bill, she said that the situation is not that dismal we hope that rules will be made soon in order to move forward. She said that while teaching as a university faculty I noticed lack of information and awareness among youth with regard to constitution and parliament. Media should not be blamed for all odds, we have to realize our own responsibility as well. She acknowledged the role played by the United Kingdom in the launch of parliamentary studies program. However, the continuance of democracy is necessary for such initiatives to succeed.

**Ms. Bisma Zafar (Research Officer, National Assembly):** asked that how electoral policies can translate into youth engagement? Mr. Danish Ali Bhutto responded by saying that electoral policies do matter. Take the example of gender sensitive representation. He emphasized that engaging youth is an evolutionary process.

**Lord Jeremy Purvis:** highlighted the citizenship education teaching in schools in UK. He said that the involvement of youth is important but they have least knowledge about parliament and its associated institutions. This is the paradox. He also highlighted the barrier of family background which often bars people from playing active role in politics. He suggested that people from diverse backgrounds should be made part of the political system in order to make it more inclusive.

**Hon. Mehmood Jan:** highlighted the role of Pakistan Tehrek-e-Insaf in bringing youth into politics.

**Hon. Shaza Fatima Khawaja:** said that we should move beyond politics especially on international forums. She said that past five years have witnessed increased youth engagement. Emphasizing the role of family background she said that institutional memory provides great help. Pakistan is a diverse country, so we have to have a good mix of all kinds of people.

**Hon. Sardar Dost Muhammad Mazari:** highlighted that almost 80% of the politicians in Pakistan belong to families with strong political backgrounds. He said that when you go to voters they come up with different kinds of demands. He emphasized that we should have proper political curriculum from the beginning. The role of media is very important in this regard. PTV should start Parliament channel.

**Hon. Shaza Fatima Khawaja:** said that PTV Parliament was started under the patronage of Honorable Speaker of National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq. The Ministry of Information and PIPS played instrumental role in this regard. The Channel broadcasts live proceedings of Parliament.

**Mr. Akbar Khan:** asked that what is the scenario with regard to youth in National and Provincial legislatures?



- ✓ Mr. Danish said that the National Assembly has no Youth Parliament, however, there are various youth programs like internships. Currently the National Assembly is employed over 200 interns. These interns are also on job trainings at PIPS. We need to formalize these programs.
- ✓ Hon. Dost Muhammad Mazari highlighted the youth internship programs being carried out in Punjab under the auspices of Subai Pakistan.
- ✓ Hon. Mehmood Jan mentioned some of the legislative measures introduced to empower youth. He also acknowledged the role of UNDP and Subai Pakistan in implementing various youth programs in the KP province.
- ✓ Hon. Shaza Fatima highlighted the youth programs introduced by the government of PML(N) including Prime Minister Internship program, Youth Development Program launched by the Planning Ministry under the leadership of Hon. Ahsan Iqbal, tours of National parliament arranged under the leadership of Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, and visits to the Prime Minister House for students carried out under the leadership of Hon. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi.
- ✓ Mr. Zaka said that PIPS has parliamentary outreach program. Under this program more than 10,000 young people have been reached out starting from high school. PIPS also offers short-term and long-term internship programs for youth. Currently, the Institute is working on a pilot project of youth parliament.

**Ms. Bisma Faiz (Youth Representative):** asked that Pakistan is a diverse country, how do you envision creating nation-building?

**Mr. Ali Hameed:** highlighted the degraded treatment accorded to young MPs by seasoned MPs, he lamented that young people are ridiculed.

**Hon. Shaza Fatima:** said that we have to responsible, we cannot just be critical. The role of media is very important. At the same the sources of information should be analyzed carefully.

## SESSION – II

### Themes:

- *Strategies of young Members of Parliament to advance peace, tolerance and prosperity*
- *Role of Young MPs in enhancing Youth participation in Parliamentary Business*

### PANEL DISCUSSION

#### Roohullah Gulzari

Mr. Gulzari opened his discussion by thanking the Secretary General CPA Mr. Akbar Khan and the organizers. He stated that in the system of democracy there are two words consistently used i.e. (1) being representative and (2) being participatory. He emphasized the need to realize the depth of these words and phrases. He explained that in the absence of these characteristics, the youth will be socially and economically marginalized and excluded from the policy making sphere of the country. As a result youth can become victim of the rhetoric and ideology of hate and extremism creating huge challenge for establishing peace and prosperity in the country. He said that in Pakistan over 50 percent of the population is below 20 years of age and 22.6 million children are out of school.

He said that youth disenfranchisement is not only the issue of Pakistan but a global phenomenon. Among the reasons for this disenfranchisement he mentioned increasing automation of industries and financial crisis which resulted in loss of employment on massive scale. Xenophobia or fear of foreigners is also one of the factors which have created various problems for youth.

He further said that to make the democratic system participatory youth should be made part of the decision making process. However, no concrete solutions have yet been identified to ensure youth participation in the democratic system. He said although youth assemblies are a noble solution in terms of engaging youth in the democratic sphere; however the challenge lies in implementing the outcome of these exercises. He said that it is the responsibility of the politicians to give concrete solutions and write policies for youth and engage them in real time



policy making.

### **Talha Haroon**

Mr. Haroon highlighted that 64% of Pakistani's are below the age of 30 and 47% of registered voters are under the age of 35 and that has increased from 33% in the last general election and it is expected that in the next election over 50% of the population of the registered voters are going to be under 35 years of age. So basically youth are not only going to decide Pakistan's future but also elect the decision makers who are going to give us policies and decide our future.

He reiterated the importance of engaging youth in political processes. In Pakistan we have national youth council constituted by the current government and it will propose policy solutions for youth. He expressed that during his visit to a Commonwealth Youth Parliament in Australia, he observed that they have their own National youth parliament in New South Wales. In Pakistan we do not have such arrangement or representation of youth in our Parliament and therefore he suggested to constitute youth parliament not only at national level but also in the regional level so that youth across Pakistan can have due participation.

### **Daniyal Hayat**

Mr. Hayat stated that this Youth Roundtable is a milestone in the journey of making democracy relevant, recognizing the role and voices of the youth. In the context of the classic demographic development of South Asia in general and Pakistan in particular, we see a huge youth bulge. Demographers consider this youth bulge either as a challenge or a threat. But I see this, that this as an opportunity- this is a blessing because youth forms the building block on which democracies of the modern world are built. And youth is a symbol of energy, of strength, power, hope, change, progress, development, technology, creativity and hard work.

He opined that knowledge based economy and fourth industrial revolutions are hallmarks of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and youth is the driver of change emanating from these transformations. We have to locate ourselves in the whole process. He stressed the need to learn from experiences of older generation in order to formulate future strategies for youth.

He said that youth in democracies cannot be ignored as it plays the same role as that of the cell in a living organism. Gone are the days when old traditional strategies were inherited from the ancestors to find solutions to the problems. Now the vision, strategies, and capabilities of the young people have gained salience, they have to come forward and present solutions for pressing issues of current age.

### **Honorable Munawara Bibi, MNA**

*(Honorable MNA made her speech in Urdu. The following paragraphs provide the English translation of her speech)*

Honorable MNA began by expressing her gratitude towards the organizers for inviting her to speak among the panelists. She expressed her pleasure as a representative of the Province of Balochistan as well as Pakistan. She laid emphasis on girls' education for peace and development in a society. She highlighted that Balochistan is primarily a tribal society in which fewer opportunities exist for girls' education. Policy makers would have to address this issue in order to promote peace and tolerance in the society.

Honorable Munawara Bibi highlighted some of the initiatives taken by Pakistan Tehrek-e-Insaf for increasing youth participation in the democratic processes. She said that youth is the driving force of PTI, which is deeply committed to empower youth in the political landscape of Pakistan.

Deliberating upon the mandatory quota for women on general seats she said that the Election Act of 2017 made it compulsory to give 5% quota to women on general seats. However, it has been observed that the political parties allocate party tickets to women on seats about which they are sure of their defeat. She denounced this practice of political parties and demanded a level playing field for all stakeholders including women.

She invited the participants to visit Balochistan in order to experience the vibrancy vested in this Province. She said that Balochistan is a dynamic land with very dynamic female representatives of the youth as flag bearers of the Parliamentary democracy in Pakistan.

#### **Honorable Sumaira Shams, MPA Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

Honorable MPA thanked the Secretary General CPA for providing the opportunity to express her ideas in this international forum. She also extended gratitude towards YPF, National Assembly and PIPS.

She informed the participants of her distinction for being the youngest Member in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly. She said that the incumbent Provincial Assembly has been blessed with 60 MPs who have been elected for the first time. Furthermore, 20 MPs represent the youth of the province, out of which 11 are under the age of 30. Also there are young Ministers in the Provincial as well as Federal Cabinets. Moreover, three Standing Committees of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly are being chaired by young leaders including Standing Committees on Social Welfare and Youth and Sports. The third committee, i.e. Health is being chaired by the Honorable Member herself. The young leaders are also represented in the Public Accounts Committee. She highlighted that she is the first female member of the Public Accounts Committee of the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

She said that trends are changing as youth is gaining greater share in the decision making process. It is encouraging that the seasoned politicians are supportive towards their younger colleagues. She mentioned especially the encouraging approach of Leader of the Opposition Akram Khan Durrani who is member of committee chaired by the Honorable MPA. She said that the idea of Young Parliamentarians' Forum in the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

was introduced by her, which was duly accepted by Honorable Speaker. The objective was to provide young MPAs with a platform to share and develop new ideas relating to the issues of youth and the functionality and importance of the country's Parliamentary system as well as enhance legislative skills to initiate and support legislation relating to the condition of youth in the province. She also highlighted some achievements of provincial YPF, including internship programs, and the compilation of upcoming draft bill for civic education. KP Government has so far supported 211 business startups and disbursed grants worth Rs. 500 million. She concluded by stating that youth is not the future, it is the present.

### **Honorable Farrukh Habib, MNA**

Hon. Farrukh Habib, a dynamic young leader from PTI said that he felt honored to be given the chance to speak on an issue so close to his heart. He said that a lot of effort is still required to make youth an effective part of decision making forums. It is the responsibility of the leadership to ensure that youth is mentored and made part of policy making process.

The young MNA advocated the reinstatement of Student unions saying that they can serve as incubators for future political leaders. He further stated that political parties are not the only beneficiaries; student unions nurture youth and are beneficial for development of leadership skills and confidence. He was also of the view that local government system can also play a vital role in bringing more young leaders to mainstream politics. Those who rise from the grass root level, from among the common people can bring new ideas and genuine concerns to limelight.

He also highlighted that Pakistan's parliament not only has young leaders but has also developed Young Parliamentarians Forum, a multi-party forum comprising of young MNAs. He also mentioned that the current cabinet has many young faces as ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries.

He also highlighted that the current Government has introduced "Kamyaab Nojawan Program" to encourage entrepreneurship and produce "job creators" not "job seekers". He was of the view that passion, new thinking, experience and knowledge passed on from older politicians is the only way forward for peaceful and prosperous society. He emphasized that he saw youth as an asset not as a liability.

### **Honorable Sardar Babar Khan, Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly**

Honorable Sardar Babar Khan, while expressing his views about the role of MPs in enhancing youth participation in policy making and promoting peace and tolerance, said that parliament can act as intermediary between the executive, constituents and civil society. He said that inclusivity and diversity in parliaments ensure action on important issues like poverty, economic development and just distribution of resources, thus preventing violent conflicts and instability.



He stated that improved youth inclusion in the Parliament of Pakistan has already generated positive outcomes. He also put forward various recommendations to promote youth inclusion in the Parliament. He suggested the introduction of legal framework to address the issue of inclusivity of youth in Parliament and supporting inclusion of young women through youth engagement programs.



He suggested that direct interactions between young MPs and youth will not only increase political awareness but will also encourage others to get involved in policy making. He also recommended that young MPs should be given assistance in understanding the working of the parliament to make them more effective legislators. He also advocated raising political awareness among youth from different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds and inclusion of youth from diverse backgrounds in the Parliament. He, in his capacity as youngest ever Deputy Speaker in the country, pledged to promote the interests of youth and raise the voice on all forums.

### **Lord Jeremy Purvis, UK House of Lords**

Lord Purvis began by praising the young speakers and researchers for their confidence and intellectual debates. He was of the view that sometimes we get our debate the wrong way about. He said that while talking of barriers faced by young people, it is very important to include older people in the debate and in audience to get the message through. This will ensure that older generation understands the ideas and issues of youth and advocate and support them. He moved on to say that this sometimes reinforces wrong assumptions about youth. He said that he strongly believes that giving youth the responsibility to manage their own budget makes them more mature in their interactions and more responsible members of the community.

He emphasized that issues of youth from deprived and underprivileged backgrounds should be especially kept in consideration. He said that youth from deprived backgrounds do not have the same opportunities as those who go to elite universities and come from privileged background, thus hindering their growth and skills. There is need to put specific mechanism to encourage youth from diverse backgrounds to raise their voice. He mentioned the practice in UK, where specific funding is allocated for youth from deprived areas and for those with mental health issues and learning difficulties.

He moved on to stress on the need to ensure inclusion of women in decision making. He emphasized that global goals and national development aims cannot be achieved until and unless women are included in the decision making process and their voices are given due importance. He stated that as MPs it is their responsibility to work to eradicate some of the barriers to youth



inclusion. He mentioned the case of Scotland, where 16 and 17 years old now have the right to vote in elections for local bodies and the Scottish Parliament. They were given the right to vote in the Scottish Referendum too. He said that he personally found youth to be more aware, politically mature and capable of making more sensible and reasoned arguments. He reaffirmed the need of youth inclusion in Parliament so that policies are not only made for

### **Honorable Naz Baloch, MNA**

Honorable Naz Baloch laid emphasis on the role of youth in promoting peace and tolerance in the society. She said that at a time when social media is a double edged sword, youth needs to act more responsibly and be more sensitive to semantics as it has a trickle down affect. Words and technology used irresponsibly can be detrimental for the stability of the society.

She emphasized the need to use modern technology and various media of connectivity to strengthen peace and tolerance nationally, regionally and globally. She stressed the need to fight for the rights of under-privileged, suppressed people and being the voice of the voiceless. She also highlighted the need of collective effort by youth to not only empower themselves and their role but also empower others' voices. She stated that the true essence of democracy is being connected to common people and raising their issues. She also stressed the need of give respect to everyone despite their political affiliations and abstaining maligning and mudslinging others.

### **Q&A SESSION**

**Mr. Qaiser Nawab (Youth Representative):** said that most of the discussion was out of context. I do not see future of student unions. He stated that hate speech on social media is threatening for youth.

**Ms. Azeema Ilyas (Youth Representative):** highlighted the issue of PTM. She said that they are termed as foreign agents and perceived as non-democratic forces. How do you propose to deal with these issues?

**Mr. Waseem Gohar (Research Officer, National Assembly):** said that inclusion does not come about only by opening up. What is the actual evolving mechanism within the political parties for the engagement of youth on equal terms?

**Hon. Munawara Bibi:** said that the youth will form the next government in Pakistan.

**Hon. Naz Baloch:** said that the political parties forget their promises after coming into power. She emphasized that the role of leaders of the political parties is important. We need to promote young leaders.

**Hon. Farrukh Habib:** highlighted the importance of democracy within the political parties. There is need to strengthen intra-party elections. He said that dynastic politics is significant challenge. On the question of PTM, he said that once you enter the parliament you have got the forum, so you should move constitutionally. First democratic elections have been held in FATA, there is no restriction on free speech.

### Remarks by the Chief Guest

#### **Honorable Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan, Mr. Asad Qaiser**

Honorable Speaker graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. He thanked Mr. Akbar Khan, Secretary General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association for his tireless efforts in organizing the 5<sup>th</sup> CPA Asia Regional Conference, and especially the Youth Roundtable in collaboration with National Assembly, the Young Parliamentarians' Forum and the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services. He assured that the suggestions of this Roundtable will be forwarded for implementation. As a token of appreciation Honorable Speaker presented the book titled Selected Speeches of Members of the Constituent/National Assembly to all the panelists as well as the Secretary General CPA.

#### **Conclusion**

Mr. Akbar Khan Secretary General CPA, summed up the proceedings by stating that focusing on youth policies and initiatives, very useful suggestions came out of the deliberations. He particularly appreciated the idea of Youth Parliaments for providing training grounds to young leadership across the Commonwealth countries. He lamented that the scope of civic education has been shrinking. It is discouraging to note that lack of knowledge and information about the constitution is a common trend in all Commonwealth countries. He said that young people look towards the society and leaders, therefore we all share the responsibility of exhibiting decent behavior. He also laid emphasis on realizing the Sustainable Development Goals, everyone needs to play his/her part to achieve these goals. Education is especially important for empowering youth and making them responsible citizens of society. He said that student unions play important role for providing young people with leadership training.



## **SDG's Panel Discussion:**

### ***Parliamentary Partnerships for SDGs***

## **Introduction**

In view of international commitments and growing concerns regarding achievement of the SDG targets, it is necessary to take up the 2030 Agenda on priority basis by invoking strong parliamentary oversight. In this regard, the CPA 5<sup>th</sup> Regional Conference allowed the creation of synergies with parliaments to share experiences and best practices from amongst each other. The SDGs panel discussion focused on parliamentary structures and instruments in the region to institutionalise the SDGs in legal frameworks and to oversee the implementation of SDG targets at national and provincial levels.

Under the guidance of the Hon. Speaker Mr. Asad Qaiser, the 15th National Assembly of Pakistan has successfully constituted the “National Parliamentary Task Force on SDGs”, comprising of 50 cross-party Members of the Parliament. Members have voluntarily joined the Parliamentary Task Force in order to create a joint ownership of the National Assembly to have an oversight on international development commitments, enact and influence policies related to SDGs and build consensus on key challenges.

The Asia region of the CPA consists of Parliaments of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Provincial Assemblies of four provinces. The panel discussion was moderated by National Parliamentary SDGs Taskforce Member MNA Ms. Shandana Gulzar Khan. The discussions unpacked multiple themes, including:

- The Sustainable Development Agenda and regional priorities;
- The SDGs and Parliamentary Oversight;
- Monitoring rights-based frameworks of national and sub-national governments;
- Working together to identify innovative solutions to cross-cutting multi-sectoral problems and synergies.

Realising the importance of UN global agenda, panelists stressed the need for parliamentary oversight and legislative reform at national as well as sub-national levels to ensure a discourse on sustainable development that is in line with national/provincial priorities.

During the course of discussion, best practices between regional countries were shared. Panelists examined the present mechanisms to oversee implementation of the SDGs, oversight and monitoring tools available within the parliamentary system. Solutions were identified from across regions to integrate sustainable development into national policies. It was highlighted that resource provision, efficient budgetary allocation and spending on SDGs by governments was a pre-requisite to effectively ensure development for all. Discussants agreed that regional parliamentary partnerships could help support and compliment the process of achieving SDGs in respective countries.

## LIST OF PANELISTS

	<b>Moderator: MNA Ms. Shandana Gulzar Khan</b>
<b>Sr.</b>	<b>Panelists</b>
<b>1.</b>	Madam Emilia Monjowa Lifaka (Cameroon)
<b>2.</b>	Andana Kumarsiri, Deputy Speaker, Sri Lanka
<b>3.</b>	Lord Purvis (UK)
<b>4.</b>	Mr. Shah Ghulam Qadir (Speaker from AJK)
<b>5.</b>	Shakeel Ahmad (Assistant Country Director, UNDP)
<b>6.</b>	Mr. Syed Murtaza Mehmood, MNA
<b>7.</b>	Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb, MNA
<b>8.</b>	Dr Nausheen Hamid, MNA
<b>9.</b>	Ms. Mehnaz Akbar Aziz, MNA
<b>10.</b>	Mr. Lal Chand Ukrani, MPA, Sindh



## GROUP PICTURE



**SDG Task Force Members with the Asian Parliamentarians and Members of the Provincial Assemblies.**

## **SDGs Panel Discussion: Parliamentary Partnership for SDGs**

A panel discussion on sustainable development agenda was held at the 5<sup>th</sup> Asia Region CPA Annual Conference held in Islamabad on 29<sup>th</sup> July – 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2019. The panel was chaired by National Parliamentary SDGs Taskforce Member MNA Ms. Shandana Gulzar Khan. The panel discussion was distributed into two parts:



### **Theme 1: Agenda 2030, Sustainable Development Agenda and Priorities of the States in the Region**

The discussion began with the moderator's opening comments on the need for prioritising SDGs as national goals within national frameworks and policies. While Pakistan is committed to achieving the SDGs, the country has embarked on strategising and implementing its development agenda in line with the SDGs with a distinct approach. Having established first of its kind SDGs Secretariat in its Parliament, Pakistan has institutionalised the process of representation, legislation and representation of the SDG targets. The Parliamentary SDGs Secretariat supports a Task Force of 50 members of the National Assembly through technical assistance, critical data provision, SDG scorecards, evidence-based research and advocacy. Similar, Parliamentary Task Forces on SDGs have been formed in all provinces, driving ownership of development targets through respective Assemblies including Gilgit Baltistan (GB) and Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK). An all-party and all-inclusive approach has been adopted while creating these Task Forces with enhanced minority representation and gender-equality as key features.

**Madam Emilia Monjowa Lifaka– Chairperson CPA**, in her remarks pointed out the need for effective oversight and monitoring to ensure SDGs targets are met. She stressed the need for regional connectivity, learning from each other's experiences and sharing successes in sustainable



development. While drawing parallels between Asia and Africa, she said that both regions have opportunities in terms of human resource and manpower, new and emerging markets and youth bulge – Parliaments of the regions should ensure policies are in line with national and sub-national priorities to ‘leave no one behind’.

While reiterating the need for Parliamentary oversight on SDGs, she stressed the need for

*Madam Emilia Monjowa Lifaka congratulated Pakistan for adopting Agenda 2030 as its National Agenda and establishing first-of-its-kind Parliamentary Secretariat on SDGs.*

adequate budgetary allocation to ensure needs are met. She said that data reflects that different levels of progress on SDGs have been made within Africa. However, she stressed that global commitment to the SDGs has not yet been sufficient, and the most vulnerable people and countries are at risk of being left behind. She also indicated that climate change

and increasing inequality within and across countries are undermining progress and threaten to reverse many of the gains made over recent years. Pointing towards poverty targets, she said that extreme poverty remains high in low-income countries affected by conflict; particularly in Africa and Asia. She stressed the need for significant policy shifts and increase in global commitment to eradicate extreme poverty in order to achieve desired targets by 2030.

**Hon. Andana Kumarsiri - Deputy Speaker Parliament of Sri Lanka**, shared interventions of the Parliament to institutionalise SDGs. He shared that a Select Committee on SDGs was established through a motion in October 2016. The Committee consists of 14 Members of Parliament representing multiple political parties. He shared that the Government of Sri Lanka is committed to work towards the UN 2030 Agenda for SDGs. He said, “The Parliament plays a vital role at the forefront through its law-making, budgeting and oversight functions- the Select Committee of the Parliament of Sri Lanka on SDGs has been mandated to make recommendations to ensure that the UN 2030 Agenda for SDGs is achieved in Sri Lanka.”



He said that marred by over three decades of domestic conflict, Sri Lanka has successfully initiated its transformation towards SDGs and to ensure a resilient society. He said that unemployment rate is below 5 per cent since 2010. Health services and free education for all have resulted in high life expectancy (75 years) and high literacy rates (98.7 %). However, he said that the country faces numerous challenges to fight climate disasters and environmental protection issues. He stressed the need for financial mobilisation and partnership strengthening.

**Lord Purvis of Tweed – House of Lords, UK** shared steps that the UK has taken in terms of increasing employment for women and differently-abled persons, improving education standards, and progress on climate and environment, and moving towards decarbonised economy. He said that, “There are real areas for improvement,



thinking for example about ensuring the housing market works for everybody, mental health, and supporting a growing and ageing population. The process of development has further deepened our respect for and understanding of the Global Goals.” While stressing the need for regional and global

connectivity, he said that it is equally important that the SDGs agenda be localised to ensure service-delivery at all levels.

He shared that the Government of UK had presented the Voluntary National Review (VNR) in July 2019 at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) of the UN in New York. He said that a commitment at the HLPF was made to follow-up and produce a further Review in 03 years’ time, “with a more collaborative, consultative and comprehensive VNR process; and delivery of a more rigorous, data-driven, contextualised evaluation of the UK’s performance against the SDG targets next time.”

**Hon. Shah Ghulam Qadir - Speaker Azad Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly** shared his experience to institutionalise SDGs at the Legislative Assembly. He said that the SDGs Taskforce was actively pursuing development agenda through effective oversight and legislative interventions. He said that a number of legislations have been passed in this regard. The Hon. Speaker highlighted that sustained peace, provision of human rights; stability and rule of law are pre-requisite for development. Armed conflict



*“We have made headways to achieve and oversee implementation of SDGs, peace remains a prerequisite for development in Kashmir.”*

*- Speaker Legislative Assembly, Shah Ghulam Qadir*

and lack of security destructively impact a country’s development, directly impacting economic growth, and result in grievances that last for generations. He said, “Some regions enjoy peace and prosperity, while others fall into endless cycles of conflict and violence. This is not inevitable and must be addressed.”

**Mr. Shakeel Ahmed, Assistant Country Director, UNDP Pakistan** shared UNDP’s experience on SDGs support in Pakistan. He appreciated the Parliament’s role in taking a lead to institutionalise SDGs through the creation of first of its kind Parliamentary SDGs Secretariat. He said that no such establishment has ever been created in any Parliament around the world. He stressed that this is a best practice and other regional parliaments could adopt.



Mr. Shakeel highlighted the need for authentic, reliable and timely data and said that this could immensely contribute to evidence-based legislation at the national as well as sub-national legislatures. He also shared that UNDP was supporting the National Parliamentary SDGs Taskforce in developing a nation-wide district level SDGs scorecard on select indications.



## **Theme 2: Agenda 2030, Sustainable Development Goals and Parliamentary Oversight**

The Moderator, MNA Ms. Shandana Gulzar Khan opened the discussion by commenting that there was a dire need to effectively ensure parliamentary oversight on SDGs targets. Simultaneously, it is necessary to learn from each other's success stories and also share bottlenecks and impediments in implementation. She said that, "Innovative solutions are required to build synergies and fill development gaps by bringing all stakeholders together."

*"While manufacturing is an important driver of economic development and employment, environment & climate remain most negatively effected in this regard. Solutions for industrial sustainability are in technological innovation, digital revolution and huge data interface with public sector institutions"*

**- MNA Ms. Shandana Gulzar Khan**

**MNA Dr. Nausheen Hamid – Member National Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs** shared that national and provincial legislatures were in the process of reviewing SDG related legislations. Given the dismal state of affairs, it was necessary to find innovative solutions that cater problems with a multi-sectoral approach. She stressed the need for regional parliaments, national and provincial assemblies to draw synergies and work closely to ensure development targets are met. Durign the course of her discussion, Dr. Nausheen Hamid shared numerous legislative frameworks as best practice for other legislatures to follow and adopt.



Given that the ambitious path to Agenda 2030 requires investments of all kinds – both public and private. It is crucial to identify and fill gaps to mobilise resources and budgets for SDG targets to be translated into tangible policy and implementation.



**MNA Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb – Former Convener National Parliamentary Taskforce on**

**SDGs** stressed the significance of media in advocacy and outreach of SDG targets to all stakeholders, particularly the general public. She also said that the breath of SDGs agenda requires parliamentarians to take action on a range of policy issues across sectors, and to overcome institutional silos to ensure that SDG targets are achieved. She highlighted the need for reviewing existing parliamentary mechanisms to enable parliamentarians to identify how these tools can be utilised to support SDG representation and oversight.



*“Parliament of Pakistan has taken a lead to have a sustainable infrastructure on SDGs that ensure effective oversight and legislative interventions on sustainable development agenda.”*

*- MNA Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb, Former Convener National Parliamentary SDGs Taskforce*

Parliament’s key role in supporting the implementation of the SDGs by building a legal framework that enables the goals to be achieved was brought under discussion. The need for pro-poor, gender-sensitive and public participatory law-making process is crucial in this regard.

**MPA Mr. Lal Chand Ukrani – Member Provincial Assembly of Sindh, CPA Asia Regional**

**Representative** focused his discussion on Parliamentary structures and instruments in the region to oversee SDG targets implementation at national and sub-national levels. He shared that regional, national and provincial parliamentary experiences regarding oversight mechanisms and cooperation with their respective Executives are lessons for all. He provided a situational analysis on existing state of affairs in the province of Sindh and challenges to economic growth and development -and how this has impacted the degree of economic engagement among the countries



of the region.

Mr. Ukrani said that the role of fair, free trade and investment in countries in achieving the SDGs; especially regarding economic equality, sustainable infrastructure, industrialisation and innovation.

**MNA Mr. Murtaza Mehmood Member National Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs** highlighted that Agenda 2030 requires localisation of discourse and inclusion of local communities in decision-making process at every level. He said that only legislatures can ensure a bottom-up public sector reform on SDGs. During the course of his discussion, he said that the 17 ambitious goals with 169 targets cut across all areas of governance such as health, nutrition, education, poverty, climate change, and sustainable use of resources. The objective remains to integrate three approaches of Development goals- social inclusion, economic development and environmental sustainability. These complex goals require commitment which depends upon the resource capacity of any country.

**MNA Ms. Mehnaz Akber Aziz – Convener Sub-Group on Child Right of the SDGs Taskforce** said that overlapping dimensions of SDGs reflect that effective allocation of resources by targeting the most vulnerable can help address SDGs strategically. This would also help and monitor the impact of policy interventions. Given this region's demographic dividends, with a large number of young people in the productive age gap, education, health, and environment assume great significance on account of their real contribution to production by ensuring rapid and inclusive growth. Given the poverty line, many lack food, clean drinking water and access to sanitation. Women and children, being the most affected, are still more likely to be poor than men because they have less paid-work, education, and own less property.



Ms. Mehnaz stressed that progress has been uneven and limited in multiple regions such as South Asia, which accounts for 80 percent of those living in extreme poverty. Growing threats brought on by climate change, conflict and food insecurity, imply that even more work is needed to bring people out of poverty. She said that legislatures must ensure that pro-poor and child-friendly policies are put in place.

Summing up the discussion, the Moderator MNA Ms. Shandana Gulzar Khan highlighted that a major outcome of the CPA multilateral engagement is to ensure a healthy exchange of ideas and solutions on sustainable development. She indicated that a formal structure on SDGs of regional parliaments could be established to institutionalise and ensure periodic information and ideas sharing amongst member countries.



# DAY THREE:

1<sup>st</sup> August, 2019

- **Closing Plenary & Ceremony:**  
*The Asian Dream of Inclusive, Participatory and Peaceful  
Democracy*

## **Closing Plenary & Ceremony: The Asian Dream of Inclusive, Participatory and Peaceful Democracy**

On 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2019, the closing ceremony of the CPA Asia Regional Conference was attended by Mr. Asad Qaiser, Honourable Speaker, National Assembly of Pakistan, honourable Sardar Babar Khan, Deputy Speaker of Balochistan, honourable Dr. Fehmida Mirza, Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination and the Member of Executive Committee of the CPA, honourable Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee and the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Cameroon, honourable J.M. Ananda Kumarasiri, MP, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Sri Lanka, honourable Palitha Range Bandara, Member of Parliament of Sri Lanka and Mr. Akbar Khan, Secretary General of CPA.

The closing ceremony started with the National Anthem of Pakistan, followed by the recitation of the Holy Quran. Mr. Shamoon Hashmi, Joint Secretary (IR) National Assembly, welcomed the distinguished guests and invited honourable Palitha Range Bandara for his address.

### **Address by Mr. Palitha Range Bandara, Member of Parliament of Sri Lanka:**

He started his address by thanking the Excellencies and distinguished guests. In his address, he emphasized on the importance of democracy and rule of law. He said that the democracy in every country rested upon a tripod - the legs being the Franchise, the Fundamental Rights and an Independent Judiciary. He said it was Rule of Law that formed bedrock upon which this tripod stood. In absence of Rule of Law, the whole structure collapsed and resulted in anarchy.

He talked about the democratic process in Sri Lanka. He said that Sri Lanka was the first country in Asia to grant Universal Franchise. In Sri Lanka, women over 21 years of age were entitled to vote at a time when the suffragettes of Britain were still fighting to lower the voting age from Britain.

He talked about Donoughmore Reforms that were followed by the Soulbury Reforms, which granted Independence to Sri Lanka in the nature of Dominion Status.





At the end, he talked about the political ups and downs in his country and concluded that the supremacy of law was substantial. He said that the first requirement in the Rule of Law was the strict adherence to the Constitution of the country.

With this, he thanked the guests and ended his address.

**Address by Hon. Dr. Fehmida Mirza, Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination and the Member of Executive Committee of the CPA:**

She started her address by thanking Mr. Asad Qaiser, Honourable Speaker of National Assembly of Pakistan for successfully hosting this conference after a gap of nine years. She whole heartedly welcomed the distinguished guests for their presence and participation in the conference. She praised the excellent arrangements made by National Assembly of Pakistan.

In her address, she talked about regional connectivity and mutual efforts to eradicate poverty, gender discrimination and to increase youth participation.

She said that South Asian countries had long been committed to the commonwealth's political values including just and honest governance, fundamental human rights, international peace and order, global economic development, and equality of all citizens without any discrimination on the basis of gender or belief. However, the region still faced challenges including conflict, social disparity, poverty, hunger, illiteracy, disease and environmental degradation.



She said that our parliaments had a binding responsibility to seek sustainable solutions to these complex challenges.

She highlighted that, Prime Minister Imran Khan had launched the Ehsaas Programme that identified a walkable path to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

She said that we were sovereign states but our problems, like our borders, were interconnected. Peace in the region, therefore, was imperative to our mutual progress and development.

She quoted an old adage from traditional African Philosophy: **“I am because we are.”**

While concluding, she said that we should not forget that there existed a common bond between all of us. We should commit ourselves to an agenda for change. An agenda for a better future - a future which was free from ignorance and hunger, polio, mal-nutrition, stunted growth, HIV-AIDS, unplanned pregnancies, unsafe abortions, violence and gender discrimination; as these were the issues we must overcome, not only as a nation but also as a joint regional and global community.

**Address by Hon. Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee and the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Cameroon:**

She started her address by expressing immense pleasure to Mr. Asad Qaiser, Speaker of National Assembly of Pakistan.

In her address, she focused on poverty eradication, gender discrimination and youth participation for development. She said that in order to overcome these issues, determination and collective efforts were necessary. She praised the formation of Women's Parliamentary Caucus and wished it great success. She urged to invest in girl child's education, as it made women assertive and better equipped to complete with their male colleagues to occupy comfortable seats in the political arena.

At the end, while talking about youth she said that youth were the leaders of tomorrow, who should not be neglected and their complete inclusivity needed to be ensured. She further added that Sustainable Development Goals - the SDGs agenda would be meaningless if due consideration was not given to the youth. After all, they were the future beneficiaries of today's policies.



With this, she thanked Mr. Asad Qaiser, Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan and distinguished guests for their kind attention.

**Address by Hon. J.M. Ananda Kumarasiri, MP, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Sri Lanka:**

He started his address by thanking Mr. Asad Qaiser, Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan and the distinguished guests.

He said that he strongly believed that he had participated in a very meaning conference on the theme of Envisioning Parliamentary Paths towards Diverse and Developed South Asia.

He said that conference deliberations provided him much thought on exchange of difficult views and shared experiences would help to develop knowledge on the main issues we faced every day.



He talked about the similar culture of both, Sri Lanka and Pakistan and appreciated the great hospitality by Pakistan.

At the end, he warmly thanked the hosts for making them feel comfortable throughout the visit.

**Address by Honourable Speaker, National Assembly of Pakistan, Mr. Asad Qaiser:**

Mr. Asad Qaiser started his address by expressing gratitude for the vote of thanks proposed by all speakers and distinguished members of delegations. He whole heartedly thanked everyone for their kind appreciation.

Mr. Asad Qaiser said that it was a pleasure for the National Assembly of Pakistan for hosting everyone in the 5<sup>th</sup> CPA Asia Regional Conference.

He said that the theme of the conference, **“Envisioning Parliamentary Paths towards a Diverse and Developed South Asia”** softened the ground for healthy and target oriented debate and initiated our collective attention to not only shared problems but also to our mutual opportunities.

He said that the convergence of the Asian Region was only possible by respecting and recognizing the diversity of our respective countries. We must work in a spirit of mutual respect, trust and confidence. And above all we must keep people at the center of all processes.



While talking about women and youth he said that sustainable socio-economic development was not possible, if we do not focus on our women and youth. He strongly believed that connecting women and youth and SDGs with legislatures through parliamentary forums could result in democratic dividends contributing immensely to the bigger picture.

Mr. Asad Qaiser thanked President and Prime Minister for their patronage and for the needed support they made available to the National Assembly in the organization of this conference, the secretary and his entire staff in the National Assembly Secretariat, distinguished delegates for their time and their valuable thoughts, and print and electronic media for their prompt coverage.

He assured that National Assembly of Pakistan shall continue to make coordinated efforts to address our common regional challenges and strengthen our ties to forge strategic partnerships.

With these words and with immense pleasure, he declared the conference formally closed and wished the guests safe return back home.

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# ANNEXURES





## 5<sup>th</sup> CPA ASIA REGIONAL CONFERENCE – 2019

*Islamabad – Pakistan*

*July 29 – August 2, 2019*

**“Envisioning Parliamentary Paths towards a Diverse and Developed South Asia”**

### **Tentative Programme**

29 <sup>th</sup> July, 2019	Arrival of All Delegates
30 <sup>th</sup> July, 2019 0900-1030hrs	Meeting Of The Branch Secretaries Venue: Gilgit Board Room(Serena Hotel)
1000-1100hrs	Meeting of The Executive Committee Venue: Quetta Board Room(Serena Hotel)
1115-1300hrs	Opening Ceremony “Envisioning Parliamentary Paths towards a Diverse and Developed South Asia” Venue: Shamadan hall I, II & III (Serena Hotel)
1315hrs	Group Photograph Venue: TBC
1330-1430hrs	Lunch Hosted By The Speaker of National Assembly Venue: Shamadan hall II (Serena Hotel)

1500-1700hrs	<b>Plenary Session 1:</b> <b>Topic: “The Challenges for Poverty Eradication in South Asia”</b> <i>Venue: Shamadan hall I, Lobby Area and Dawat Restaurant</i>
1930hrs	<b>Dinner &amp; Cultural evening</b> <b>Venue: PNCA</b>
<b>31<sup>st</sup> July,2019</b> 0900-1300hrs	<b>The CWP Seminar: <i>Challenges and Impediments Against Women in Politics</i></b> <b>Venue: Shamadan hall II (Serena Hotel)</b>
0900-1300hrs	<b>Youth Round Table: <i>Making Democracy Relevant; Why is it Important to Recognize Young Voices?</i></b> <b>Venue: Shamadan hall III (Serena Hotel)</b>
1300hrs	<b>Lunch</b> <b>Venue: Shamadan hall II (Serena Hotel)</b>
1500-1700hrs	<b>SDG’s Panel Discussion: <i>Parliamentary Partnerships For SDGs</i></b> <i>Venue: Sheesh Mahel(Serena Hotel)</i>
<b>1<sup>ST</sup> August,2019</b> 0900-1100hrs	<b>Closing Plenary &amp; Ceremony: The Asian Dream of Inclusive, Participatory and Peaceful Democracy</b> <i>Venue: Shamadan hall I, II &amp; III (Serena Hotel)</i>
	<b>Free Day</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> August,2019</b>	<b>All Day – Departure of Delegates</b>





### Participants List

**5<sup>th</sup> CPA Asia Regional Conference**  
**July 29 – August 2, 2019**  
**Islamabad**  
**CPA Branches**

S #	Invitees	Composition
1.	Punjab	1. Mr Parvez Elahi, Speaker/Delegate 2.Sardar Dost Muhammad Mazari, Deputy Speaker/Delegate 3. Madam Sajida Begum,MPA 4.Mr Muhammad Khan Bhatti, Secretary 5.Mr Inayat Ullah Lak, Director General (PA&R)
2.	KPK	1.Mushtaq Ahmed Ghani,Speaker 2.Mr. Mahmood Jan,Deputy Speaker 3.Dr. Sumaira Shams, MPA 4.Dr. Asia Asad, MPA 5.Ms. Nadia Sher,MPA 6.Mr. Nasrullah Khan Khattak, Secretary 7.Attaullah Khan, Focal Person
3.	Baluchistan	1.Sardar Babar Khan Musakhel, Deputy Speaker 2.Malik Sikandar Khan Advocate, Leader of opposition 3.Malik Naseer Ahmad Shahwani, MPA/Observer 4.Mr. Asghar khan Achakzai, MPA/Observer 5.Ms. Mahjabeen Sheran, MPA Observer 6.Mr. Safdar Hussain - Secretary Balochistan Assembly 7.Mr. Muhammad Hayat, observer
4.	Sindh	1.Ms. Rehana Laghari, Deputy Speaker 2.Firdoous Shamim Naqvi, Leader of Opposition/MPA 3.Dr. Lal Chand Ukrani, MPA



		4.Mohammad Qasim Soomro, MPA 5.Mr. Ghulam Muhammad Umar Farooq, Secretary
5.	Sri Lanka	1. Hon. J. M. Ananda Kumarasiri, MP, Deputy Speaker and the Chair of Committees, Leader of the Delegation 2. Hon. Palitha Range Bandara, Member of Parliament 3. Hon. Mohan Priyadarshana De Silva, Member of Parliament 4. Hon. Heshan Withanage, Member of Parliament 5. Hon. Kaveendiran Kodeswaran, Member of Parliament 6. Mr. Neil Iddawala, Chief of Staff and Deputy Secretary-General of Parliament
6.	Bangladesh	1. Mr. Abu Reza Mohammad Nezamuddin, MP 2. Mr. Leakoat Hossain Khoka, MP 3. Mr. Rejaul Karim Bablu, Mp
7.	Senate Secretariat Pakistan	1.Hon. Mr. Sadiq Sanjrani, Chairman Senate of Pakistan 2.Imamuddin Shouqeen, Senator 3.Nuzhat Sadiq, Senator 4.Manzoor Ahmed, Senator 5.Liaqat Khan Tarakai, Senator 6.Sajjad Hussain Turi, Senator 7.Rahila Magsi, Senator 8.Muhammad Azam, Accompanying Officer
8.	Pakistan Delegation	1.Mr. Muhammad Qasim Khan Suri, Deputy Speaker/Leader of Delegation 2.Ms. Shandana Gulzar Khan, MNA/Parliamentary Secretary 3.Dr. Fehmida Mirza, Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination 4. Syed Naveed Qamar, MNA/Chairman Standing Committee 5.Syed Fakhar Imam, MNA/Chairman Kashmir Committee 6.Mr. Farrukh Habib, MNA/Parliamentary Secretary 7.Ms. Shazia Marri, MNA 8.Rana Tanveer Hussain, MNA 9.Malik Ehsan Ullah Tiwana, MNA/Chairman Standing Committee 10.Ms. Shahida Akhtar Ali, MNA 11.Ms. Munaza Hassan, MNA/Chairperson Standing Committee 12.Mr. Shahid Khattak, MNA 13.Ms. Kanwal Shauzab, MNA/Parliamentary Secretary 14.Mr. Ali Zahid, MNA 15.Ms. Maleeka Ali Bokhari, MNA/Parliamentary Secretary 16.Ms. Mehnaz Akbar Aziz, MNA 17.Mr. Sher Ali Arbab, MNA/Chairman Parliamentary Committee on CPEC 18.Dr. Ayesha Ghous Pasha, MNA

## Special Guests

S #	Invitees	Composition
1.	Uganda	<p>1.Rt. Hon. Rebecca A. Kadaga, Speaker of parliament of Uganda  2.Hon. Jalia Bintu, Member of parliament  3.Hon. Okupa Elijah, Member of the Parliament</p> <p><b><u>Parliamentary Staff</u></b></p> <p>1. Mrs. Jane Lubowa Kibirige Clerk to Parliament  2. Mr. Busiku Peter PPS to Speaker  3. Mr. Kango Moses ICT Officer to Speaker  4. Mr. Kabogoza Phillip Protocol to Speaker  5. Mr. Azira Grace ADC to Speaker  6. Ms. Tumuhairie Justine Aide to Speaker  7. Mr. Senfuma Ibrahim, Public Affairs Officers</p> <p><b><u>Diplomats of Honorary Consulate of Uganda in Karachi</u></b></p> <p>1. Mr. Benjamin Mukabire, Charge d'affairs  2. Mr. Julius Ankunda, First Secretary  3. Dr. Awais Raoof, Honorary Consul  4. Mr. Twaha Nakatanza, Consular Officer</p>
2.	UK	<p>1. Lord Purvis of Tweed, MP  2.Mr. Robert Harper, Asia Pacific Regional Programme Manager</p>
3.	Malaysia	<p>1.Hon. Dato' Dr. Noraini Binti Ahmad,CWP Chairperson,Member of Parliament for Parit Sulung  2.Hon. Dato' Haji Mohd Rashid Bin Hasnon,Deputy Speaker of The House of Representatives  Malaysia,Member of Parliament for Batu Pahat  3.Mohd Faizal Bin Yusak,Parliament of Malaysia</p>
4.	Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly	<p>1. Mr. Fida Muhammad Nashad, Hon'ble Speaker GBA.  2. Mr. Aurangzeb Khan, Law Minister GB.  3. Mr. Imran Nadeem, Member GBA.</p>
5.	AJ&K	<p>1.Mr. Shah Ghulam Qadir (Honorable Speaker, AJ&amp;K Assembly)  2. Dr. Muhammad Najeeb Naqi Khan (Minister for Health &amp;Finance, Azad Government of State of Jammu &amp; Kashmir)  3.Mr. Mushtaq Ahmed Minhas (Minister for Information &amp; Tourism Azad Government of State of Jammu &amp; Kashmir)  4. Mr. Basharat Hussain (Secretary Legislative Assembly of Azad Jammu &amp; Kashmir)  5. Mr.Mustafa Ali Asghar, Personal Staff Officer to Speaker</p>

## **Guests from CPA**

S#	Invitees	Composition
1.	Secretary General	Akbar Khan
2.	Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee	1.Hon. Emilia Monjowa Lifaka 2, Mr Ndum John Teboh, CPA Cameroon Branch Secretary
3.	CPA President	Rt. Hon. Rebecca A. Kadaga, Speaker of parliament of Uganda
4.	CWP Chairperson	Dato' Noraini Ahmad, MP, CWP Chairperson, Parliament of Malaysia



## **Annexure: Detailed Programme for WPC Session**

### **WPC Session Challenges and Impediments Against Women in Politics Programme 31 July 2019 Shamadan I-II, Serena Hotel, Islamabad**

Welcome address by the Patron, WPC  <b>Honourable Dr. Fehmida Mirza</b>  (MNA / Federal Minister of Inter Provincial Coordination, Government of Pakistan)  09:40 a.m. – 09:50 a.m.	
Opening remarks by the Moderator,  <b>Honourable Ms. Munaza Hassan</b>  (MNA / Secretary WPC)  09:50 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	
<b>First Technical Session</b>  <b>Theme: Prioritizing Women's Issues as National Issues</b>  <b>10:00 a.m. -10:40 a.m.</b>	
Honourable Dr. Shireen Mehrunnisa Mazari	Federal Minister for Human rights, Government of Pakistan
Honourable Ms. Jalia Bintu	MP, Uganda
Honourable Ms. Mahjabeen Sheran	MPA Balochistan Assembly
Ms. Moneeza Hashmi	Women's Rights & Media Expert
Q & A  Concluding Remarks by the Honourable Chair & distribution of souvenirs to the distinguished panelists	

<p align="center"><b>Second Technical session</b></p> <p align="center"><b>Theme: The Push Towards Backbenches in the House</b></p> <p align="center"><b>10:45 a.m. -11:30 a.m.</b></p>	
Honourable Ms. Rehana Leghari	Deputy Speaker, Sindh Assembly
Honourable Dr. Aisha Ghaus Pasha	MNA
Honourable Ms. Kishwar Zehra	MNA
Honourable Mr. Firdous Shamim Naqvi	Leader of Opposition, Sindh Assembly
<p>Q &amp; A</p> <p>Concluding Remarks by the Honourable Chair &amp; distribution of souvenirs to the distinguished panelists</p>	
<p align="center"><b>Third Technical Session: Theme</b></p> <p align="center"><b>The “General Seat” vs “Reserved Seat” Bias</b></p> <p align="center"><b>11:35 a.m. -12:05 p.m.</b></p>	
Honourable Mr. Shah Ghulam Qadir	Speaker Legislative Assembly of Azad Jammu and Kashmir
Honourable Ms. Zubaida Jalal of Pakistan	Federal Minister for Defence Production, Government of Pakistan
Ms. Rukhshanda Naz Pakistan	Ombudsperson, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa,
<p>Q &amp; A</p> <p>Concluding Remarks by the Honourable Chair &amp; distribution of souvenirs to the distinguished panelists</p>	

**Fourth Technical Session: Theme**

**Male Dominant Party Structure**

**12:10 p.m. -12:40 p.m.**

Honourable Ms. Romina Khursheed Alam      MNA

Honourable Ms. Nadia Sher      MPA, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly

Dr. Salma Malik      Academic & Author

Q & A

Concluding Remarks by the Honourable Chair & distribution of souvenirs to the distinguished panelists

Closing remarks by the Honourable Chair Emilia Monjowa Lifaka MP, Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Cameroon

12:40 p.m.-12:55 p.m.

Souvenir presentation to the Honourable Chair Emilia Monjowa Lifaka MP, Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Cameroon

& Vote of thanks by the Honourable Secretary. WPC

12:55 p.m.-1:00 p.m.

Lunch

1:00 p.m.

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## Annexure: Biographies of Panelists / Speakers for WPC Session

### CWP-WPC Seminar: Challenges and Impediments against Women in Politics

31<sup>st</sup> July 2019, Islamabad, Pakistan



#### Bios

Sr. No	Picture	Name	Brief Bio
1.		Hon. Ms. Emilia Monjowa Lifaka MP, Deputy Speaker of Parliament of Cameroon.  Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee  (Chair)	She is the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Cameroon since 2009. She has served her Parliament in various Sub-Committees such as Committee of Finance and the Budget, Constitutional Laws Committee, Committee of Good Governance, and also as Member of the National Commission for Human Rights and Freedom.  Ms. Lifaka is Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee. Since 2007, she has been very engaged in CPA activities and attends meetings in both Africa and internationally.
2.		Dr. Fehmida Mirza, MNA/ Federal Minister	She is the Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination of Pakistan since August 2018. Dr. Mirza served as the 18 <sup>th</sup> and only woman Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan from 2008-2013 and was elected from Badin constituency. She holds the honor of being the first woman to be elected Speaker from the Muslim world. She is also the Patron of Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) and has numerous contributions towards empowerment of women in Pakistan.  Dr. Mirza is a member of the Executive Committee of CPA.
3.		Hon. Ms. Munaza Hassan, MNA  Secretary WPC/ Chairperson	Ms. Munaza Hassan is a seasoned politician, belonging to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). She is the Secretary of WPC and currently chairs the Standing Committee

		Standing Committee Climate Change  (Moderator)  Steering Committee	on Climate Change of the National Assembly.  She served as Member National Assembly (MNA) from 2013-2018 and was reelected for the second consecutive term in 2018. She is a renowned champion of gender equality and empowerment of all Pakistani women. In addition, she is also a member of the CWP Steering Committee.
<b>First Technical Session: <i>Prioritizing Women's Issues as National Issues</i></b>			
<b>Panelists</b>			
4.		Hon. Dr. Shireen Mazari, MNA/Minister for Human Rights	<p>Dr. Mazari is the Federal Minister for Human Rights, in office since 20th August 2018. She is serving the second consecutive term as MNA for PTI.</p> <p>Dr. Mazari holds a B.Sc. (Hon) from the London School of Economics and later received her PhD from Columbia University in political science. She joined Quaid-i-Azam University as an associate professor and went on to head the university's strategic studies department. From 2000-2008, Dr. Mazari headed the government-funded Institute of Strategic Studies. Dr. Mazari also worked as the editor of The Nation from 2009-10.</p> <p>She has written extensively on issues of defense and security and has authored many books.</p>
5.		Hon. Ms. Jalia Bintu, MP, Uganda	<p>She is a Member of the Parliament of Uganda. She has also served as the Vice Chairperson of Uganda Women Parliamentary Association.</p> <p>Ms. Bintu is a teacher by profession. She has also been involved in social work and has greatly contributed towards promoting girl's education.</p>

			She is a member of the Executive Committee of the CPA-Branch Uganda.
6.		Hon. Ms. Mahjabeen Sheran, MPA	She is a Member of the Balochistan Provincial Assembly, representing the Balochistan Awami Party (BAP). She has initiated a powerful campaign to push for daycare centres in assemblies and government departments to make them more inclusive for women.
7.		Ms. Moneeza Hashmi	<p>Wearing several prominent and professional hats, she is presently into her second term as President of the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association, UK; is handling the international relations of HUM TV as General Manager, Pakistan; is the Project Advisor to Light Storm Entertainment; and Trustee of Faiz Foundation Trust and Faiz Ghar.</p> <p>Ms. Hashmi entered the world of television in 1974 as Assistant Producer of Pakistan Television (PTV), Lahore and she retired in 2004 as Director Programmes, the first female to date to head this position. She is recipient of various national and international awards, including the President of Pakistan's Pride of Performance Award 2002.</p>
<p align="center"><b>Second Technical Session: <i>The Push Towards Backbenches in the House</i></b></p> <p align="center"><b>Panelists</b></p>			
8.		Hon. Ms. Rehana Leghari, Deputy Speaker Sindh Assembly	<p>She is the current Deputy Speaker of the Sindh Assembly. She was elected as a candidate of Pakistan People's Party (PPP).</p> <p>Ms. Leghari is also the Special Assistant to Chief</p>

<sup>1</sup> Could not join the event but her practical contributions for establishing day care centres are valuable and inspiring.

			Minister of Sindh on Human Rights.
9.		Dr. Aisha Ghaus Pasha, MNA	<p>She is a member of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and serving MNA since August 2018. Previously she was a Member of the Provincial Assembly (MPA) of Punjab, from 2013-2018. She has also served in the Provincial Cabinet in Punjab as Minister for Finance in May 2015.</p> <p>She earned the degrees of Bachelor of Arts (Hons), Master of Arts in Economics and a Master of Applied Science in Economics from the University of Karachi. She also has a PhD in Economics from the University of Leeds in 1991.</p>
10.		Hon. Ms. Kishwar Zehra, MNA	<p>She is a prominent Pakistani legislator, and one of the founding members, of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM). She is serving her third term as MNA. She started her political career as a Councilor in the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation in 1987.</p> <p>Apart from her political pursuits, Ms. Zehra also has impressive contributions in the field of social work. She sits on the Board of Directors of the Sindh Institute of Urology and Transplantation (SIUT). She introduced the Volunteer program from which thousands of students have benefitted from. She also sits on the board of a trust of a charity institution, which focuses on unlawful sale and purchase of human organs in Pakistan.</p> <p>Moreover, she has actively worked for the protection, education, and employment of women.</p>

11.		Hon. Mr. Firdous Shamim Naqvi, Leader of Opposition, Sindh Assembly	Mr. Naqvi was elected as MPA in Sindh Assembly in August 2018 as a candidate of PTI. He was made leader of opposition on 24 September 2018. He has served as President of PTI's Karachi chapter.
<p align="center"><b>Third Technical Session: <i>The "General Seat" vs "Reserved Seat" Bias</i></b></p> <p align="center"><b>Panelists</b></p>			
12.		Hon. Mr. Shah Ghulam Haider, Speaker of AJK Legislative Assembly	Mr. Shah Ghulam Qadir is the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) since 30 <sup>th</sup> July 2016. He has been elected as member of the AJK Assembly five times since 1991. He has previously served as the Minister for Information and Social Welfare, as well as Minister for Finance, Planning & Development and Rehabilitation in AJK.
13.		Hon. Ms. Zubaida Jalal, MNA/ Federal Minister for Defence Production	<p>She is the Minister for Defence Production of Pakistan assuming the office on 20 August 2018. She is member of Balochistan Awami Party (BAP), an ally of the PTI-led government.</p> <p>In addition, she is a teacher, libertarian, and social activist. She came to national prominence and public fame as Minister of Education in the cabinet of Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz from 2002–07.</p>
14.		Ms. Rukhshanda Naz, Ombudsperson Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	She is an eminent women rights activist and advocate. Currently she is serving as the ombudsperson for the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. She is the first female to be appointed as ombudsperson in the province.

#### Fourth Technical Session: *Male Dominant Party Structure*

##### Panelists

15.		Hon. Ms. Romeena Khurshid Alam, MNA	<p>She is a second term Parliamentarian belonging to PML-N. She has served as the General Secretary of PML-N 's Youth Women's Wing. She is currently part of the WPC's Working Council, serving as its treasurer.</p> <p>Internationally, she is serving as Convenor of Green Parliament Caucus, Convener of Philippines and Singapore, Coordinator of Friendship Group of Canada, and Coordinator of Netherland, Sweden and France Friendship Groups.</p>
16.		Hon. Ms. Nadia Sher, MPA	<p>Ms. Nadia Sher Khan is MPA of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provincial Assembly, Pakistan. This is her second consecutive term as MPA, previously serving from May 2013 to May 2018.</p>
17.		Dr. Salma Malik	<p>She is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Defence and Strategic Studies, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad Pakistan. She specializes in the areas of War, Military Sociology, South Asian Affairs, Conflict Management &amp; Transformation, Human Security, CBMs &amp; Conventional Disarmament. She has authored several books and research papers.</p>





## **ANNEX: Profiles of Panelists for Youth Roundtable:**

### **Honorable Speaker, Asad Qaiser**



Honorable Asad Qaiser was elected as the 21st Speaker of the National Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan by securing 176 votes on 15th August, 2018. He created parliamentary history by being consequently elected as the Speaker of the assemblies at the Provincial as well as National level. During his last term, he successfully served as the Speaker of the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from 2013 to 2018.

### **Honorable Heshan Withanage, M.P.**



Heshan Withanage is a Sri Lankan politician and a member of the Parliament of Sri Lanka. Elected from Rathnapura District in 2015, he is a Member of the United National Party. He has graduated from University of Sri Jayewardenepura. By profession he is a Company Director. He is member of Sectoral Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Lands, Sectoral Oversight Committee on Legal Affairs (anti-corruption) and Media, Sectoral Oversight Committee on Business and Commerce, Sub Committee on Resolving issues relating to the National Intellectual Property Office of Sri Lanka under the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Business & Commerce, Backbencher Committee, Ministerial Consultative Committee on Buddha asana & Wayamba Development, Ministerial Consultative Committee on Public Administration, Disaster Management and Rural Economic Affairs, Ministerial Consultative Committee on Lands and Parliamentary Reforms.

### **Lord Jeremy Purvis**



Lord Jeremy Purvis was appointed a Liberal Democrat working peer in August 2013, taking the title Lord Purvis of Tweed. He was Member of the Scottish Parliament during 2003-2011. At that time, he was the youngest constituency MSP and he is one of the youngest ever Life Peers. Currently, he is a member of the House of Lords International Relations Committee, Executive Committee member of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (UK) and a member of the

Executive Committee of the British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. He is co-chair and office holder of a number of All Party Parliamentary Groups on constitutional reform, the Global Goals, human rights, democratic participation.

#### **Honorable Senator Azam Khan Swati**



Senator Azam Swati is currently the Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs. Earlier, he held the portfolio of Federal Minister for Science and Technology in the current government. A seasoned politician currently affiliated with Pakistan Tehrek-i-Insaf, he has been Chairman Senate Library Committee and member of Business Advisory Committee, Committee on Delegated Legislation, Interior, Inter-Provincial Coordination, Science and Technology, China Pakistan Economic Corridor, and Law Reforms.

#### **Honorable Shaza Fatima Khawaja, MNA**



Shaza Fatima Khawaja is a Pakistani politician who has been a member of the National Assembly of Pakistan. Previously she was a member of the National Assembly from June 2013 to May 2018. She is also a faculty member at LUMS. She was re-elected to the National Assembly as a candidate of PML-N on a reserved seat for women from Punjab in 2018 Pakistani general election. She is member of Standing Committee on Commerce and Textile. She is also member of Standing Committees on Planning, Development and Reforms. She received her Master's degree in International Relations from the University of Warwick. She is former General Secretary of the Youth Parliamentary Forum.

#### **Honorable Mahmood Jan, MPA**



Mahmoud Jan is a Pakistani politician who has been serving as the Deputy Speaker of the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa since August 2018. Previously, he was a member of the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from May 2013 to May 2018. He has a degree of Bachelor of Arts. He is chairman of House and Library Committee and he is also Chairman of Standing Committee on Rules of Business and Privileges.

### **Honorable Farrukh Habib, MNA**



Farrukh Habib is a Pakistani politician who has been a member of the National Assembly of Pakistan since August 2018. He is the Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Railway. Farrukh Habib is one of the pioneer members of ISF. He was elected to the National Assembly of Pakistan from Constituency NA-108 (Faisalabad). He is a member of NA Standing Committee on Science and Technology and Defense Production. He holds a Bachelor's Degree.

### **Honorable Naz Baloch, MNA**



Naz Baloch is a Pakistani politician who is a member of the National Assembly of Pakistan. She is Social Activist, Writer & Columnist and Philanthropist. She has obtained Bachelor's degree in Economics. She is member of Standing Committees on Information, Broadcasting, National History and Literary Heritage. She is also member of Standing Committees on Information Technology and Telecom.

### **Honorable Sardar Dost Muhammad Mazari, MPA**



Honorable Dost Muhammad Mazari is a Pakistani politician. He has been serving as the Deputy Speaker of Provincial Assembly of Punjab since August 2018. Earlier he was the Member National Assembly of Pakistan during 2008 and 2013. He is also Parliamentary Secretary for Water and Power.

### **Honorable Sardar Babar Khan Musakhel**



Sardar Babar Khan Musakhel is a Pakistani politician who is the current Deputy Speaker of the Provincial Assembly of the Baluchistan. He has done bachelors. He is currently chairman of House and Library Committee in Baluchistan assembly. Mr. Babar is just 28 years old and he is among the youngest Deputy Speakers.

### **Honorable Munawara Bibi Baloch, MNA**



Honorable Munawara is a Pakistani politician who hails from the province of Balochistan. She is an active member of the Pakistan Tehrek-e-Insaf. She is an ardent supporter of youth empowerment and advocates for girls' education especially in the province of Balochistan. She also member of various Standing Committees of the National Assembly of Pakistan.

### **Honorable Sumaira Shams, MPA**



The youngest Member Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Honorable Sumaira Shams belongs to Pakistan Tehrek-e-Insaf. She is Chairperson Standing Committee on Health and member of various parliamentary committees including the Public Accounts Committee of the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. She played an instrumental role in the establishment of the provincial Young Parliamentarians' Forum in her Province.

### **Mr. Muhammad Rashid Mafzool Zaka**



Mr. Muhammad Rashid Mafzool Zaka is presently serving as Executive Director PIPS. He is a member of the pioneering team of the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services, who envisioned and established the Research and Training Programmes as PIPS' Director (Research and Informational Services). He brings with him over two decades experience in academia, research and parliamentary services.

Mr Zaka was awarded Professional Legislative Fellowship by US State Department (Oct-Nov., 2015) for Washington. He has also attended an International Course on Legislative Research by US Congressional Research Service (2008) and an International Fellowship on Human Rights and Budget Analysis (April 18-29, 2008) held by US Budget Group and Asian Institute of Human Rights, Thailand.

He has authored ten books on parliamentary business and oversight and human rights in addition to numerous handbooks/modules for Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services. Mr Zaka is an eloquent and much sought speaker on ideology of Pakistan, leadership, human rights, parliamentary research, rules of procedures and best practices, role of youth, peace, tolerance and state building well as security issues not only by academia but civil society, national and

international media and parliamentary institutions. He has done MSc in Strategic Studies with distinction and MPhil in Int'l Relations (1997-98) from Pakistan's top-ranking Quaid e Azam University.

He started his full-time career as Lecturer, political science (1996-2000) and Faculty at FFIMCS (2000-2003). Mr Zaka has also served on leading portfolios including Head, Deptt. of Social Sciences and Development Studies, Iqra University (2003-2006); Director, Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI) (2006-2007) and Legislative Capacity Advisor, Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Project, (PLSP) (2007-2010) before joining pioneering team setting up PIPS.

Mr Zaka has supervised eleven MS dissertations in the fields of development studies, international relations, sociology, diplomatic and strategic studies. He has been Member, Board of Studies at the Department of Defence and Diplomatic Studies, Fatimah Jinnah Women University, FJWU. He has been on the panel of experts on Radio Pakistan current affairs programme News Nite in addition to being an Editorial Writer at The Muslim English daily way back in 1996-97. Mr Zaka has also served as the Executive Director of the Institute from 1st July to 30th September, 2014 and from 3rd September, 2015 to 19th May, 2016.

### **Mr. Akbar Khan**



Mr. Akbar Khan was appointed as the Secretary General of the CPA by the 61st General Assembly of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) in October 2015 and he took up his post in January 2016. Mr. Khan was recommended to the 61st General Assembly by the Association's International Executive Committee, which is made up of representatives of the nine regions of the CPA – Africa; Asia; Australia; British Islands and Mediterranean; Canada; Caribbean, Americas and Atlantic; India; Pacific; South-East Asia.

The CPA Secretary-General, was born in Guyana, South America before moving to the United Kingdom. Mr Khan is an honours graduate in both International Law from the University of Cambridge (Jesus College) and in English Law from the University of Reading (UK). Following graduation, Mr Khan qualified at the English Bar as a Barrister-at-Law (1990) and subsequently as an Attorney-at-Law at the New York Bar in 2000 (USA). He is also a qualified Workplace Investigator for Misconduct.

Mr Khan has practised at the English Bar and has worked in the fields of international law and human rights for the United Nations Organisation in Geneva and the Palestinian Territories (Gaza). He joined Her Majesty's Diplomatic Service at the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 2003 as a legal adviser and has held several diplomatic positions. These include Head



of the International Law Section at the British Embassy, The Hague representing British legal interests before the International Courts and United Nations Tribunals. This was followed by a period of special leave in which he served as the Director of Legal Affairs and Principal Legal Counsel to the Commonwealth Secretary-General at the Commonwealth Secretariat. In 2012, as Head of the Commonwealth Delegation he led the high-level fact finding mission to the Republic of the Maldives to establish the circumstances behind the transfer of executive power.

Between 2013/15 he headed the UK Delegation to the International Meetings of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS), and Chaired the CGPCS Working Group on Capacity Building off the Horn of Africa. In recognition of his contribution to promoting the international rule of law and good governance he was appointed a Member of the prestigious World Economic Forum Global Council on the Rule of Law (2012 -2013). He was also featured as one of the ‘Leaders’ on the Rule of Law by The Hague Institute on the Internationalisation of Law (HiiL).

Mr Khan is currently an Independent Member of the Audit Committee for the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames; a Legally Qualified Chair (LQC) of the Police Misconduct Panels; and is a Board Level Diversity Champion for ParliREACH, a UK Parliamentary staff association that promotes race, ethnicity and cultural heritage.

### **Mr. Danish Ali Bhutto**



Danish Ali Bhutto is Parliamentary Researcher at the National Assembly Secretariat. A Shadow Minister in the 8th Commonwealth Youth Parliament, he was one of the only two young people nominated by the CPA to represent Commonwealth youth and present policy interventions at the 63rd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Dhaka. He conducted research on gender-sensitive issues during his association with the Women’s Parliamentary Caucus which eventually materialized into national policy. He was selected as one of the 50 global future leaders by the British Council in 2018 and Emerging Leaders of Pakistan fellow by the US Dept. of State in 2015. Danish completed Advanced Policy and Leadership course at the University of Cambridge in 2018 and MBA from Sukkur IBA in addition to various professional training in public sector management, strategic planning, civic engagement and human rights. He has represented Pakistan in the UK, US, Canada and Bangladesh.

### **Mr. Danyal Hayat**



Danyal Hayat is Head of International Department and Manager Industrial Linkages and Technology Transfer. His portfolio includes working on honorary basis with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Directorate of Youth Affairs as an honorary member of the Youth Development Commission (YDC). He champions Open Education, Open Access, Open Data and Open Government and has the honor to serve as the Organizing Committee Member for Open Con in Canada. He is a Global Shaper at World Economic Forum, Duke of Edinburgh award holder, Advisory Committee Member for Open Access Week and alumnus of Asia Europe Foundation (ASEF), Harvard Project for Asian and International Relations and UNESCO's Global Citizenship Education (GCED).

### **Mr. Roohullah Gulzari**



Roohullah Gulzari has over five years of experience in nonprofit and social development sector where he has worked with various international partners. Roohullah has earned a Master degree in Public Administration (MPA) from the School of Public Policy at Central European University in Budapest, Hungary and a Bachelor's of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Engineering and Technology (UET), Pakistan. He has in past worked as a regional campaigner on an education reform campaign where he helped create a robust political and social capital to influence the government of Pakistan's education policies. He has also worked with the Youth Development Foundation (YDF) on USAID-funded projects related to peace education and countering violent extremism. For his contribution for taking concrete steps for the right to education and youth empowerment through innovative local campaigns, Stockholm based Swedish Institute awarded Roohullah the 'Young Connectors of the Future' award in 2015. He is passionate about rights and evidence-based policymaking in the fields of education, social inclusion, and youth empowerment.



### **Ms. Shezreh Mirza**

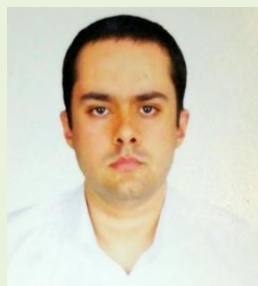


Shezreh Mirza completed her BA in Economics with an additional major in Public Policy from Michigan State University (MSU) and a Graduate Diploma in Law from BPP University, London. She is going to London to pursue the Legal Practitioners Course (LPC) this year. Currently, she has been associated with Ahmer Bilal Soofi & Co in Islamabad. In 2011, Ms. Mirza was elected as General Secretary of the Pakistan Student Association at Michigan State University. She was also the Vice President of the Listening Ear, MSU chapter. A crisis intervention center that counsels victims of sexual assault and those suffering from depression and dealing with grief. She participated in the Commonwealth Youth Parliamentary Conference in London in 2012 and was also elected Minister for Women Affairs. During the same year, she was also selected as a participant for the Global Youth Connect and worked towards empowering underprivileged communities around the world through which she volunteered with the UN Committee on Aging and the New York City Coalition Against Hunger.

### **Mr. Syed Ali Hameed**



Executive Director at Shaoor Foundation for Education and Awareness (SFEA), Ali is a known countering violent extremism (CVE) expert, peace-building specialist and a social entrepreneur working in the development arena of Pakistan since 2008. He has worked in more than 60 districts of Pakistan engaging thousands of social leaders, especially youth at universities and religious seminaries. He is currently running project Amn Qalaab, Salamti Fellowship Program and National Peace Talks and spearheaded Pakistan's leading women entrepreneurship development programs. He is the brain Capacity Enhancement Leadership and Linkages (CELL) Development Program for SMEs and heads a transnational peace-building campaign called "Peace Without Borders". He is an alumnus of Peace+ Fellowship by Erasmus (Netherlands), International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) on Community Conflict Resolution – United States, Georgetown Young Leaders Summit (GYLS), Doha -Qatar, Global Peace on the Move (GPM14) by World Peace Initiative, Thailand, Commonwealth Youth Parliament, UK, Pakistan Young Leaders Conference, UK and many others.

**Mr. Talha Haroon**

Mr. Talha Haroon is a Research Officer in National Assembly Secretariat. He is currently working as Officer-In-Charge Questions in Legislation Wing. He has also served in the Legislative Drafting Council of National Assembly where he was responsible for drafting, vetting and researching legislative proposals. He also rendered services as the Secretary Committee for Standing Committee on Railways. He represented Pakistan in the 9th Commonwealth Youth Parliament as the Member of Cabinet, Minister of Finance. This year he has been granted the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship by the US government to pursue higher studies in the George Washington University.

## **5<sup>th</sup> CPA Regional Conference - 2019**

Venue: Gilgit Board Room (Serena Hotel)

July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019

**Youth Round Table - Making Democracy Relevant- Recognizing the significance of youth voices**

**Chair / Moderator : Mr. Akbar Khan, Secretary General, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association**

### **Session 1 Themes:**

1. *Youth as Building Blocks of Inclusive Democracy*
2. *Youth Platforms as stepping stone to the Parliament*

09:05 am – 11:00 am	<b>Panelists:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Honourable. Heshan Withanage, MP, Sri Lanka</li> <li>II. Honourable Mehmood Jan, Deputy Speaker., KP Assembly</li> <li>III. Honourable Shahid Khattak, MNA</li> <li>IV. Honourable Shaza Fatima Khawaja ,MNA</li> <li>V. Honourable Makhdoom Mustafa Mehmood, MNA</li> <li>VI. Mr. Danish Ali Bhutto, Commonwealth Youth Parliament Participant</li> <li>VII. Ms. Shezreh Mirza, Commonwealth Youth Parliament Participant</li> <li>VIII. Mr. Ali Hameed, Commonwealth Youth Parliament Participant</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Q &amp; A at the end of each topic</i></p>
Tea Break	11:00 am

### **Session 2 Themes**

3. *Strategies of Young Members of Parliament to advance peace, tolerance and prosperity*
4. *Role of Young MPs in enhancing Youth Participation in Parliamentary Business*

11:15 am-1:00pm	<b>Panelists:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Honourable Mohd Faizal bin Mohd Yusak MP, Malaysia</li> <li>II. Honourable Sardar Babar Khan, Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly</li> <li>III. Honourable Farkh Habib, MNA</li> <li>IV. Honourable Uzma Riaz, MNA</li> <li>V. Honourable Naz Baloch, MNA</li> <li>VI. Mr. Daniyal Hayat, Youth Parliament Participant</li> <li>VII. Mr. Talha Haroon, Commonwealth Youth Parliament Participant</li> <li>VIII. Mr. Roohullah Gulzari, Youth Representative</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Q &amp; A at the end of each topic</i></p>
01:00 pm	Lunch

## **Agenda: Detailed Youth Roundtable**



## AGENDA for SDGs Panel Discussion

SR	THEME	TIME	SPEAKERS
1	Agenda 2030, Sustainable Development Agenda and Priorities of the States in the Region (1:15 min)	03:00 – 04:15 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Honorable Emilia Monjowa Lifaka</b> <i>Chairperson CPA (8 min)</i></li> <li>• <b>Ms. Shandana Gulzar, MNA</b> <i>(Moderator)</i> <i>Member Task Force on SDGs, Parliamentary Secretary Ministry of Commerce (3 min)</i></li> <li>• <b>Hon. J. M. Ananda Kumarasiri, MP</b> <i>Deputy Speaker, Parliament of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (6 min)</i></li> <li>• <b>Speaker AJK Legislative Assembly</b> <i>Shah Ghulam Qadir (6 min)</i></li> <li>• <b>Lord Purvis of Tweed</b> <i>House of Lords, UK (6 min)</i></li> <li>• <b>Shakeel Ahmad</b> <i>Assistant Country Director, UNDP (6 min)</i></li> <li>• <b>Q&amp;A (40 min)</b></li> </ul>
2	Agenda 2030, Sustainable Development Goals and Parliamentary Oversight (1:15 min)	04:20 – 05:35 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ms. Shandana Gulzar, MNA</b> <i>Member Task Force on SDGs, Parliamentary Secretary Ministry of Commerce (3 min)</i></li> <li>• <b>Mr. Syed Murtaza Mehmood, MNA</b> <i>Member Task Force on SDGs (6 min)</i></li> <li>• <b>Ms. Mehnaz Akbar Aziz, MNA</b> <i>Member Task Force on SDGs, Convener Special Committee on Child Rights of the SDGs Task Force (6 min)</i></li> <li>• <b>Ms. Nausheen Hamid, MNA</b> <i>Member Task Force on SDGs (6 min)</i></li> <li>• <b>Mr. Lal Chand Ukrani, MPA</b> <i>Member Provincial Assembly of Sindh (6 min)</i></li> <li>• <b>Honorable Emilia Monjowa Lifaka</b> <i>Chairperson CPA (3 min)</i></li> <li>• <b>Q&amp;A (28 min)</b></li> </ul>
	Souvenirs	5:35 pm	



# **Conference Glimpses**





Meeting of the Executive Committee being chaired by Speaker National Assembly, Hon. Asad Qaiser



Group Photo of the Executive Committee Members



Branch Secretaries Meeting



Speaker National Assembly Mr. Asad Qaiser in a group photo with Head of delegates participating in 5th CPA Asia Regional Conference in Islamabad on 30.07.2019.





Arrival of the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Hon. Dr. Arif Alvi



Honorable President, Dr. Arif Alvi in conversation with the distinguished participants of the 5<sup>th</sup> CPA Asia Regional Conference in Islamabad



**President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi, Speaker National Assembly Mr. Asad Qaiser and Head of delegates listening to National Anthem on the occasion of 5th CPA Asia Regional Conference in Islamabad on 30.07.2019.**



**Speaker National Assembly Mr. Asad Qaiser addressing the inaugural session of 5th CPA Asia Regional Conference hosted by National Assembly of Pakistan in Islamabad on 30.07.2019.**





**Speaker National Assembly Mr. Asad Qaiser addressing the inaugural session of 5th CPA Asia Regional Conference hosted by National Assembly of Pakistan in Islamabad on 30.07.2019.**



**Dignitaries attending the Inaugural Session of the 5<sup>th</sup> CPA Asia Regional Conference, Islamabad**





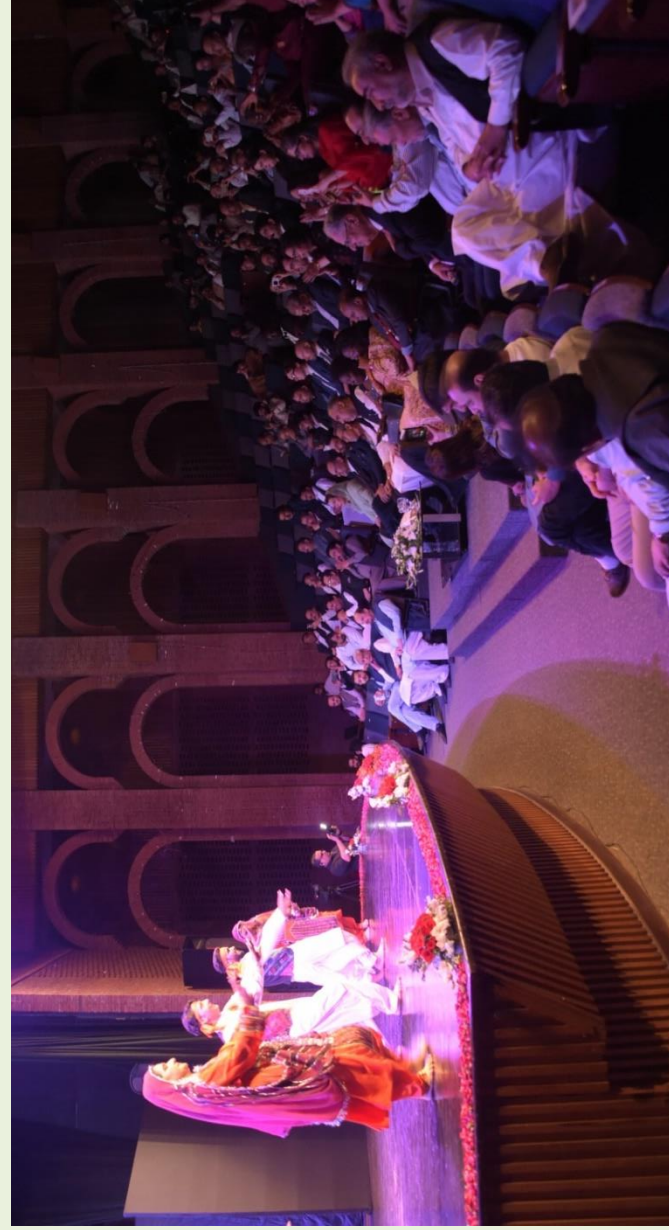
Address by the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Hon. Dr. Arif Alvi at the Inaugural Session of the Conference



Group Photo of the Participants of 5<sup>th</sup> CPA Asia Region Conference with the Chief Guest, Dr. Arif Alvi, Honorable President of Pakistan



Plenary Session of Day One, “Challenges for Poverty Eradication in South Asia” being chaired & moderated by Hon. Leader of the House in Senate of Pakistan, Senator Shibli Faraz



Cultural Evening at Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA)





Group Photo of the performers with distinguished guests of the 5<sup>th</sup> CPA Asia Regional Conference at PNCA, Islamabad



Commonwealth Women's Parliamentarians' (CWP) Seminar on Challenges and Impediments against Women in Politics





WPC Secretary and CPA Steering Committee Member, Ms. Munaza Hassan addressing the Commonwealth Women's Parliamentarians' Seminar



Honorable Speaker Mr. Asad Qaiser addressing the Commonwealth Women's Parliamentarians' Seminar



Madam Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee and the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Cameroon addressing the Commonwealth Women's Parliamentarians' Seminar



Honorable Senator Azam Swati, Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs delivering Keynote Address at Youth Round Table





Panelists of the Session – II of the Youth Round Table



Group Photo of the Participants of the Youth Round Table with the Honorable Speaker, Mr. Asad Qaiser





Group Photo of the Participants of the Youth Round Table with the Honorable Speaker. Mr. Asad Oaizer



Group Photo of the Distinguished Panelists of the SDGs' Panel Discussion on Parliamentary Partnerships for SDGs





SDGs Secretariat Team with the Distinguished Members and Panelists of the  
SDGs' Panel Discussion



Glimpses from SDGs' Panel Discussion





Glimpses from SDGs' Panel Discussion



Speaker National Assembly Mr. Asad Qaiser addressing Closing Ceremony of 5th CPA Asia Regional Conference 2019 in Islamabad on 01.08.2019.





**Speaker National Assembly Mr. Asad Qaiser addressing Closing Ceremony of 5th CPA Asia Regional Conference 2019 in Islamabad on 01.08.2019.**



**Speaker National Assembly Mr. Asad Qaiser in a group photo with delegates after Closing Ceremony of 5th CPA Asia Regional Conference 2019 in Islamabad on 01.08.2019.**





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