

**Center for International Strategic Studies Sindh
In Collaboration with DHA Suffa University**

**Book Launch of Professor Dr Huma Baqai's Book:
"Collected Works on Foreign Affairs and Security Policy"**

**12 September 2023 (1130 – 1330 Hours), Auditorium, DHA Suffa
University**

Address by the Chief Guest

**Lt Gen Khalid Ahmed Kidwai, NI, HI, HI (M), (R), Advisor
Development National Command Authority**

Bismillah Ar Rehman Ar Raheem.

1. Professor Dr Huma Baqai, Senator Javed Jabbar, Mr Ikram Sehgal, Professor Dr Khalida Ghaus, Engineer Professor Dr Muhammad Afzal Haq, Ambassador Qazi Khalilullah, honourable ladies and gentlemen of Pakistan's and Karachi's intellectual galaxy, members from the media, faculty members of DHA Suffa University and of the Center for International Strategic Studies Sindh (CISSS), students of DHA Suffa University. Assalam Alaikum.

2. I feel greatly honoured to be in the company of this star studded gathering of Pakistan's respected and well known intellectuals, academics and professionals. These are people who have devoted their lives in the service of Pakistan and brought laurels and pride to Pakistan, and to all of us, by simply excelling in their respective fields of expertise, spreading knowledge far and wide, and making varying contributions to Pakistani society. Between them, there is a huge reservoir of wisdom, intellect, expertise and knowledge that would be the pride of any nation. Let me put it most humbly that Pakistan is immensely proud of all of you.

3. We have gathered here to launch Dr Huma Baqai's book *Collected Works on Foreign Affairs and Security Policy*. It is a collection of articles and op-eds written by her during a 4 years period between 2018 and 2022. Dr Huma Baqai needs no introduction. She is well known, well regarded and held in high esteem not only in Karachi and Pakistan but also internationally. This large gathering is in itself a recognition of her standing and a tribute. While personally for many years while serving in Rawalpindi, I had heard much about her outstanding abilities, and had also read some of her incisive articles, I had not had the good fortune of personal interaction with her till a few years ago. It was only when we were in the process of establishing the Center for International Strategic Studies Sindh (CISSS) in Karachi in early 2021, and were looking for potential members for the CISSS Advisory Board that we hit the jackpot. We requested Dr Baqai to join us on the Advisory Board, and she very promptly and graciously agreed to come on board. CISSS has since been that much richer.

4. As most of you would know Dr Baqai was Associate Dean Faculty of Business Administration at Karachi's prestigious Institute of Business Administration (IBA) before being appointed as Rector of Millennium Institute of Technology and Entrepreneurship (MITE). In her illustrious career besides doing so much else in the academic field, at a fairly hectic pace if I may say, she has now selected 46 articles, probably out of over 100 of her works, to put together as a book that is being launched today. In a 4 years' time window, this comes to a very healthy average of articles per month. Besides indicating what a prolific writer she is, the collection is also a reflection of the depth and mastery that Dr Baqai enjoys over some of the most challenging and complex geo-political issues of our times.

5. Dr Baqai's canvass of interest, geographically speaking, focuses essentially on the geographical dimensions of the strategic region in which Pakistan is located, and rightly so, because it directly or indirectly bears upon the vital security interests of Pakistan. The subject matter of the book most certainly includes the congenital twins of geo-politics and

geo-economics, and the strategic effects that these generate in South Asia specifically on the troubled relationship between Pakistan and India. This large geographical or strategic expanse forms a fairly neat rectangle on the map from the Middle East in the west to the Asia Pacific region in the east, from Russia and China in the north to the limits of the Arabian Sea in the South – and includes for good measure, to our north, the famous Heartland of Mackinder. Add to this the ever looming long distance shadow that is cast on the areas of this strategic mosaic by the United States as a super power of almost a hundred years standing, and you have one of the most critically complex regions of the world where we live. This is where the current global power games are being played out between a super power the US struggling to retain its so far undisputed status, and a rising China which many believe has already risen, as it subtly and softly challenges the super power in enlarging its influence mostly in areas of geo-economics but also as an extension in geo-politics. Consider the international rush to join the China sponsored BRICS, the SCO and the accompanying de-dollarization wave in trade transactions, and we get the general drift of which way the wind might be blowing; straws in the wind perhaps.

6. As against this, it appears that the US and the west might just be playing on the back foot in a reactive mode to various Chinese geo-economics and geo-political initiatives. Consider the latest outcomes of the G-20 meeting in New Delhi this last weekend, the Summit Declaration, and most visibly, the announcement of the IMEC, India-Middle East-Europe Corridor in what is clearly a bit of a catch up game to China's Belt and Road Initiative of 2013 (BRI); even the acronym IMEC has a familiar sound bite to CPEC. One wonders though whatever happened to President Biden's earlier initiative of 2021 which was labeled as "Build Back Better World." As of now however the figures that are being quoted do make an interesting comparison. The BRI mentions 1 Trillion USD plus whereas the IMEC figure has been quoted at 25 Billion USD. Time alone will provide some of the answers.

7. As I talk about this vast strategic cum geographical region that is the focus of Dr Huma Baqai's works, indirectly, it also indicates the firm grasp that she enjoys over the geo-political and geo-economic issues and developments that continue to emerge in the region from time to time. More often than not these are issues that are inter-linked in a complex web and usually follow a chain of broad continuity in the power play politics and economic policies of the various players in the region. Yet by the nature of their complexity these remain ever evolving, therefore demanding ever evolving responses from Pakistan's foreign policy and security establishments. As such, from the perspective of the author, and by extension from the perspective of Pakistan, there is never a dull moment for analysts like Dr Baqai who follow these events and developments closely. In her book she keeps us glued to the strategic subject matters between 2018 and 2022 as these evolved with her incisive views and opinions.

8. Pakistan, due to the sheer pulls and pressures of its geo-strategic location and the tough neighbourhood, has invariably and continuously experienced foreign policy challenges throughout the 75 years of its existence. One can go back in our short history and start enumerating, recalling and analyzing each decade since 1947.

9. The Fifties and the Sixties, which saw an era of early political instability, belonged subsequently to the relatively stable political and economic period of President Ayub Khan. The period witnessed ironically not only the blossoming of Pakistan-US romance on the one hand but also included the crucial opening of strategic relations with China on the other hand; the relationship with China has since solidly stood the test of times over several decades, even though the Pakistan-US romance later turned sour. This was also the period when two wars in South Asia, separated in time and space, left deep strategic effects which continue to reverberate till today in one way or another. I refer to the India-China War of 1962 and the India-Pakistan War of 1965.

10. The Seventies of Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's era not only consolidated Pakistan's relations with China to a point that these became the cornerstone of Pakistan's security policy, but also brought a breath of fresh air by strengthening Pakistan's relations with the Muslim world especially with the holding of the widely popular Islamic Summit in Lahore in 1974. The Islamic Summit, which was one grand event of its kind, was a truly star studded affair and brought the entire top leadership of the Islamic world to Lahore. It helped in lifting the gloom and doom and the sagging spirits of Pakistanis after the trauma of the loss of East Pakistan in 1971.

11. Most importantly, however, from the perspective of Pakistan's then weakened security especially after the explosion of a nuclear device by India in 1974 at Pokhran, the Bhutto era marks the birth of Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme and is therefore, in my view, the most critical decade of Pakistan's history from a security point of view. When we reflect on it, you will probably agree that if that decision had not been taken then, Pakistan today, minus the nuclear weapons capability, would have been at the mercy of its ruthless adversaries.

12. The Eighties of General Zia ul Haq's rule saw the continuation of the development of Pakistan's nuclear capability on the one hand, but on the other hand, we also witnessed the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union in 1979 thereby raising the specter of Communism and Communist USSR becoming Pakistan's ominous neighbours if not pushed back. Both developments had profound effects on Pakistan's security. While the nuclear programme continued to be developed to secure Pakistan against external aggression for times to come, the war in Afghanistan against the Soviet occupation, though successful in expelling the USSR from the neighbourhood, left lasting negative and destabilizing effects on Pakistan's internal security with which we continue to grapple to this day. Also in this decade, we can add the consequences on Pakistan's internal dynamics of the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979. It has had debilitating effects on Pakistan's internal security and stability with the rise of sectarianism.

13. The Nineties were a period of layers upon layers of US military and economic sanctions against Pakistan because of Pakistan's continued pursuit of the nuclear programme; this, after Pakistan had served the US interest in organizing the fight against the USSR which eventually led to its disintegration. Pakistan felt used and discarded. The term "transactional relationship" came into usage and has left a lasting bitterness in Pakistan-US relationship. The Nineties also saw the birth of the Taliban movement in Afghanistan with its inevitable negative fallout on Pakistan. The one item, however, that remained rock solid in the Nineties too was the national determination and consensus to develop Pakistan's nuclear capability irrespective of the government in power. Pakistan's finest hour also belongs to the Nineties when in May 1998 Pakistan responded to India's five nuclear tests with six of our own. The nuclear programme thus emerged out of the closet and Pakistan became the seventh nuclear power in the world finding stable security against external aggression.

14. There is no doubt that the two decades of this 21st Century have been defined and shaped worldwide by the events of 9/11 while also retaining the influences in many ways of the events and strategic effects generated earlier in the five decades of the 20th Century. While Pakistan's robust nuclear deterrence continued to enforce peace of sorts on the eastern border, howsoever fragile, it is the western borders and the state of internal security especially in Baluchistan and the KPK which have become problematic for Pakistan. The fallout of the post 9/11 US invasion of Afghanistan and Pakistan's participation in the war on terror continues to haunt Pakistan. Some of this can also be attributed to the fallout of the global struggle between the US and China. Pakistan's close strategic relationship with China particularly the unfolding of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has been opposed by the US and India in an anti-Pakistan, anti-China nexus and therefore the fillip to the insurgencies in the two critical provinces keeps Pakistan destabilized.

15. As you might conclude from the foregoing seven-decade recap that I have placed before you, Pakistan's decision makers have invariably been

confronted by global and regional challenges, which more often than not, were not of our making and were mostly quite beyond Pakistan's control. Pakistan has usually been in a reactive mode and has mostly been responding to the unfolding policies pursued by the US, the USSR of old and Russia of today, China, India and even at times Iran and Afghanistan. These are the dilemmas and dynamics that Pakistan's geo-strategic location shapes and imposes on Pakistan's foreign policy choices and responses.

16. From these 75 years of Pakistan's foreign policy choices and dilemmas, Dr Huma Baqai has chosen the specific period between 2018 and 2022 during which she has written profusely on a variety of aspects from the perspectives of Pakistan's foreign policy and security policies. In this context, rather than express my views afresh, I will reproduce verbatim and read for the benefit of the audience what I have written in her book as my brief comments, and I quote:

17. "Dr Huma Baqai is a very respected academic and prolific writer on Foreign Affairs and Security matters with a deep understanding of the complex web of geo-strategic challenges that face Pakistan. In my judgement, she belongs to the realistic school of thought with feet firmly placed on the ground with respect to Pakistan's security dilemmas. *Collected Works on Foreign Affairs and Security Policy* is a collection of 46 brilliantly analysed articles written by her in the critical period from 2018 to 2022, a period which includes major security events like the Pulwama-Balakot skirmish with India, the deep freeze in India-Pakistan relations, the inevitable though chaotic US withdrawal from Afghanistan, the Taliban takeover and its ramifications for Pakistan, the rise of the Middle Eastern version of Glasnost and Perestroika, and the Ukraine War. In each of these developments, Dr Baqai has presented rational and realistic analysis from the Pakistani perspective in the relevant articles. The book is a highly recommended read for any student or practitioner of geo-political policies in Pakistan," unquote. Do I need to say any more?

18. Yes, I think. There is one final word that I would like to say. And this is exclusively to my very dear up and coming students of the DHA

Suffa University who are studying International Relations, Strategic Studies, or any other subject, and also to the Faculty of the Center for International Strategic Studies Sindh (CISSS), who are also in some ways both researchers and students at the same time. Both are present here in strength.

19. This book by Dr Baqai should be studied by each one of you as a classic edition, a textbook primer perhaps, of how op-eds and articles on strategic issues should be written, how a subject matter or topic should be selected according to its importance, relevance and currency, how the subject matter should be described and elaborated, how the issues should be analysed critically from all aspects particularly for their relevance to the larger issues of Pakistan's security, and finally, drawing from the arguments evolved, placing possible but realistic options, choices, and recommendations for the reader and for that matter for policy managers to exercise as a response to the issues under discussion. Between the lines, Dr Baqai's book provides ample guidelines on the writing methodology on how to organize your op-ed or article. Please use the book as a learning tool. And if there is one word that I would like to emphasise upon when it comes to offering options, choices or recommendations, that word is 'realism'. Do not lose touch with the cold reality of the real world! Stay within the realms of prevailing ground realities, and understand the strengths as well as limits of Pakistan's national power potential; remain mindful of how the real world operates; remember that the real world is ruthless and seeks to serve respective national interest only. The world rides rough shod with policies and there is no room for compassion or sentiments when it comes to national interests. In the same vein therefore, your business too is to look out for Pakistan's national interest through cold, calculated, dispassionate analysis but with a very clear reality check and understanding of the national power potential. Remember there are limits to power; even the US has limits to power; recall Vietnam and Afghanistan; recall the USSR in Afghanistan and Russia today in Ukraine. Do not live in a dream world or expect an ideal world. See things from the view point of Pakistan's national interest only.

Remember the geo-political practitioner's cardinal principle: friends and enemies are not permanent, only national interests are permanent.

20. As I end I would like to offer my sincere felicitations to Dr Huma Baqai on the publication of this latest book of hers. It's a great effort that she has made and I am sure that it will find due recognition and place in the limited literature that is available on Pakistan's foreign affairs and security policy. I also hope that she will continue to write on some of the critical challenges that continue to confront Pakistan despite her heavy workload as Rector of the University. My good wishes for her.

21. I thank you, ladies and gentlemen.