

Round Table Discussion on
**The Resolution of the Kashmir Dispute for Peace in
South Asia**

Organized by
MUSLIM Institute

The research-oriented think-tank 'MUSLIM Institute' organized a round table dialogue here on "The Resolution of the Kashmir Dispute for Peace in South Asia" which was addressed by renowned Indian author and journalist Kuldip Nayar and prominent Pakistani columnist and analyst Orya Maqbool Jan.



Mr. Orya Maqbool Jan

Prominent Pakistani Columnist & Analyst

Addressing the event, Orya Maqbool Jan highlighted the multifaceted dimensions of the Kashmir dispute and its all-pervasive effects on India and Pakistan. He stressed that the resolution of the dispute was in the interests of two countries. He said that foreign powers could not be relied upon for its settlement as there is a sharp diversion between their interests and ours'. The arms manufacturers and suppliers of the world cannot be expected to become ambassadors of peace for others. Therefore, influential circles in India and Pakistan must themselves commit to play their part for resolution of the Kashmir dispute. Sincere efforts are required for its settlement to overcome the threat of nuclear war in the region.



At the time of partition, British India consisted of over 630 independent princely states in addition to the provinces. While most joined either India or Pakistan at independence, Kashmir was one of three states whose future was disputed, in addition to Hyderabad and Junagarh. It is high time that the issue is resolved in order to deter the potent threat of war that it creates between the two nuclear armed neighbours. The common man in both countries wants and needs peace but powers with vested interest spread agitating propaganda, especially in India where the ISI is blamed for every problem in India and Indian politicians attempt to encash votes by firing up sentiments against Pakistan and the ISI during election campaigns. However, in Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was the last politician to have roused the question of enmity with India as an electoral issue.



Mr. Kuldip Nayar

Renowned Indian Author & Journalist

Mr Kuldip Nayar recounted the history of the Kashmir dispute in light of his personal experiences and memories since partition of the sub-continent and stressed the importance of its resolution for the progress and stability of India and Pakistan. He said that since 1947 the two countries have fought three wars over the issue. At the onset of the dispute, Pandit Nehru, then Prime Minister of India had committed to carrying out a plebiscite in Kashmir once the dust had settled on the war. Sixty seven years have passed since partition but Kashmir is still a disputed territory. If the two countries continue in their past approach to the conflict, the dispute could persist for another 67 years without reaching a settlement. He said that we must end poverty and hunger in our societies by strengthening our economies through a more efficient utilization of our resources in the light of aspirations of common people of our countries, whereas precious resources are dedicated to strengthening militaries against each other and the buildup of forces in Kashmir. He said that the destruction of the Babari mosque in India was a disaster that created a sense of insecurity in Indian Muslims. He stressed that the peaceful resolution of all outstanding issues including the Kashmir dispute was indispensable for the development and progress of all countries in South Asia and that this can only be achieved through dialogue rather than military force. He predicted that enhanced trade linkages and increased social contact throughout South Asia following a peaceful settlement would lead to the emergence of South Asia as an influential economy and market in the world. He said that the Kashmir dispute must be resolved by dialogue and peace without involvement of foreign powers who have their vested interests in maintaining war economies and are the least interested in finding a resolution to the issue. The two countries are nuclear powers and cannot afford another war which would cause mutual destruction.



Sahibzada Sultan Ahmad Ali

Chairman MUSLIM Institute

Sharing the aims and role of the think-tank, Chairman MUSLIM Institute, Sahabzada Sultan Ahmad Ali said that Kashmir is one of the most pressing outstanding issues in the world and the Institute is committed to promoting discourse amongst intellectuals and influential circle of society for solution of the issue. He further said that the Institute believes in promoting research and dialogue to find solutions of all issues and the instant event is part of same efforts. He also apprised that an International Kashmir Conference is being organized this month by MUSLIM Institute, where the Institute is trying to arrange representation of influential voices and intellectuals from both sides of Occupied and Azad Jammu and Kashmir.



Question Answer Session

Engaging in discussion with the participants and answering their questions, Mr. Nayar said that Narinder Mudi will not be the next Prime Minister of India. And if he is, there are a great many liberal voices to speak out for Indian Muslims. Renowned journalist Aamir Khakwani asked how a model of economic integration such as the European Union could be achieved in South Asia without a big country like India acting in a spirit of sacrifice and changing its attitude towards its smaller neighbours in the region. Agreeing with the observation, Mr. Nayar stressed on the need for the bureaucracies and militaries to work in tandem with the need to build greater cooperation.



Prominent intellectuals, analysts and researchers participated in the discussion following the key note addresses. Participants include MNA Pervaiz Malik, Ex-MNA Ms. Bushra Nazeer, Analyst Gen (R) Muhammad Javed, Defense Analyst Gen(R) Rahat Latif, Gen(R) Muhammad Afzal Najeeb, Defense Analyst Brig (R) Farooq Hameed, Scholar Ms. Samina Shahid, Senior Advocate Supreme Court Ahmad Awais, Pervaiz Hameed from Nawa e Waqt, Journalist Tanveer Shahzad, Journalist Aamir Khakwani, MPA Rana Tajammal Hussain, Principal Pakistan Law College Professor Humayun Ehsan, Journalist Karamat Ali Bhatti, Dean Punjab Law Collage Dr. Amamullah & Dean South Asian Study Punjab University Dr. Mazher Saleem, Col (R) Z. I. Farrukh, Faculty of F.C University Lahore Dr. Dildar Ahmad Alvi, Sahibzada Sultan Bahadar Aziz and Research Associates Adnan H. Satti, S. H Qadri, Zeeshan Danish and Ahmad Al-Qadri etc.

