

**EMBRACING
CHALLENGES
FOSTERING
SOLUTIONS**

CRSS IN 2023



**Center for
Research &
Security
Studies**

Rule of Law - Security - Governance

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CRSS IN 2023

A YEAR OF IMPACT AND VISION

In the ever-evolving national and regional security landscape, the Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS) continued to be a driving force for change, critical discourse on security, counter-radicalization and dialogue on issues that have a direct bearing on Pakistan.

Herewith, CRSS is proud to present its annual report 2023. Most of the activities and writings this year focused on issues such as Pakistan's internal security dynamics, relations with, and the situation in Afghanistan, Sino-Pakistan relations, and the broader international security issues with a direct or indirect linkage with Pakistan.

Throughout 2023, our rigorous security-focused research and comprehensive reporting shed light on the state of security in the country; meticulously crafted quarterly and annual security reports, provided invaluable insights into the trends and dynamics of the security environment. The resonance of our findings in media - both national and international, underscored the significance of the CRSS flagship work in the aforementioned areas.

Through initiatives such as Beyond Boundaries and the Afghanistan Inclusion Dialogue Initiative (AIDI), CRSS facilitated bilateral dialogues, and fostered collaborative spirit among diverse stakeholders from both countries which reaffirms our role as a catalyst for positive change.

Part of our mission is the empowerment of youth and women and as agents of change and peace. Through international gatherings, virtual consultations, and innovative initiatives such as Paving Pathways to Social Cohesion, we provided platforms for dialogue, advocacy - on issues that concern us all, amplifying voices, fostering inclusion, and nurturing leadership for a more just and equitable world.

In response to the complex dynamics of the Middle East, we delved deep into the intricacies of the Israel-Hamas conflict. Through insightful discussion and expert analysis, we illuminated the root causes, highlighted global implications, and advocated for diplomatic solutions. Our efforts to promote understanding and dialogue in this volatile region underscored our commitment to peace and reconciliation on the global stage.

Our independent initiatives like Asia Watch and Afghan Studies Centre continued to provide in-depth coverage and analysis of various aspects related to South/ West and East Asia, with a particular focus on China, and Afghanistan.

In addition to its thematic work, CRSS remained dedicated to advancing knowledge and understanding through its research publications, including the following:

“CPEC: An Explainer”: This report provided a comprehensive overview of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), addressing frequently asked questions on this Sino-Pak collaboration, and tracing the historical context of Pakistan-China relations.

“What Lies Behind the Iron Brotherhood?”: Authored by Mr. Imtiaz Gul, Executive Director of CRSS, it explored the fundamentals of Pakistan-China cooperation, emphasizing trust and mutual interests. The publication offered insights into the warm and historic relations between the two countries.

“A Critical Review of Taliban Rule: August 2021 - December 2023”: This publication delved into the dynamics of Taliban rule in Afghanistan, offering critical analysis and insights into the implications for regional security and stability. The report also analyzes the state of governance, diplomatic engagements, human rights, public health, and social welfare. Additionally, it explores the Taliban’s economic and trade policies, and fiscal measures, providing insights into the challenges and opportunities within Afghanistan’s economic landscape.

“Rethinking Pakistan's Economy”: A comprehensive study on Pakistan's economic landscape that discusses challenges such as high inflation rates, trade imbalances, and the impact of external events like the COVID-19 pandemic. The report provided policy recommendations for sustainable economic development.

“Climate-Induced Security Threats to Pakistan”: Recognizing the existential threat posed by the climate change, CRSS undertook a comprehensive study to elucidate the climate-induced security threats facing Pakistan. Our research underscored the urgent need for coordinated action to mitigate risks, build resilience, and safeguard the future of generations to come.

In the pages ahead, you'll find detailed accounts of our initiatives, impactful outcomes, and our vision for the future. As we navigate the complexities of our time, CRSS continues to serve as a beacon of knowledge, innovation, and positive change.

As we embark on the journey ahead, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to our partners, stakeholders, and the communities we serve for their ongoing support. Together, let us embrace the challenges, seize the opportunities, and continue to build a safer, more prosperous interconnected world that provides a future of peace, prosperity, and resilience for all.

SECURITY

Security has been one of the Center's core foci since its inception, covered mainly through the research and reporting related to the violence-linked casualties recorded in the country and security trends based on the data collected quarterly and annually, and comparative analysis.

In this regard, three quarterly and one annual security reports were issued during the year 2023, getting massive coverage in the national and international media, primarily because of the trends identified about the state of violence in the country and what they mean for/ how they jeopardize the security of the citizens and defense forces of the country.

Following three quarterly security reports, one each for Q1, Q2, and Q3, the annual security report 2023 issued on the new year's evening identified the following trends about Pakistan's state of security:

- In 2023, Pakistan witnessed 1524 violence-related fatalities and 1463 injuries from as many as 789 terror attacks and counter-terror operations. This includes nearly 1000 fatalities among civilians and security forces personnel. The overall fatalities including those of outlaws mark a record 6-year high, exceeding the 2018 level and highest since 2017.
- Moreover, the country saw a surge in violence for the third consecutive year with an uptick recorded each year beginning from 2021.

- KP and Balochistan provinces were the primary centers of violence, accounting for over 90% of all fatalities and 84% of attacks (including incidents of terrorism and security forces operations) recorded during this period.
- The year 2023 also recorded an alarming surge in violence by about 56% - an unprecedented escalation in the last ten years, with the overall number of fatalities increasing from 980 in 2022 to 1524 in 2023.
- Nearly 65% of all violence-related fatalities recorded in 2023 resulted from terrorism, while the remaining 35% from the security forces operations against the outlaws.
- With over 500 fatalities and 299 terror attacks suffered, 2023 was the deadliest year for security forces in nearly a decade, exceeding the 2015 level and highest since 2014. Moreover, this year, their fatalities surged and an uptick recorded in the terror attacks they suffered for the third consecutive year beginning from 2021.

Casualties from Violence

Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism

Countrywide | Province Wise - 2023

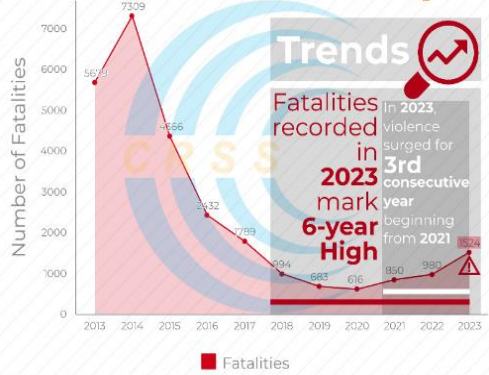


Annual Security Report | 2023 | Pakistan | Center for Research and Security Studies

Comparative Fatalities from Violence

Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism

Countrywide | Year Wise - 2013 to 2023

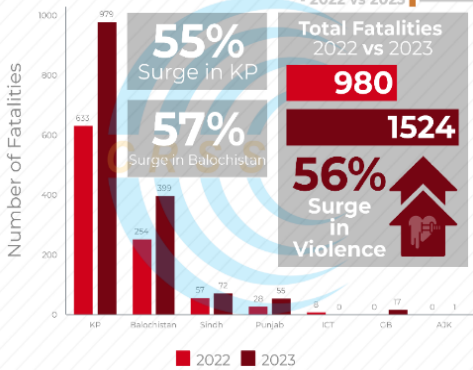


Annual Security Report | 2023 | Pakistan | Center for Research and Security Studies

Comparative Fatalities from Violence

Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism

Countrywide | Province Wise - 2022 vs 2023

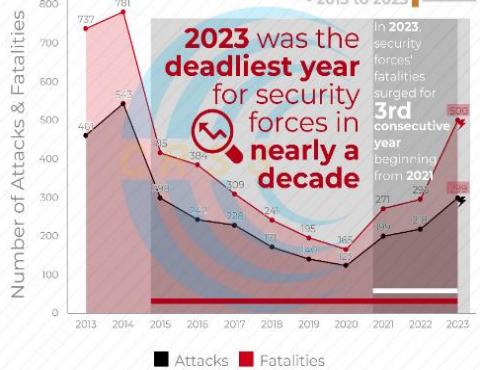


Annual Security Report | 2023 | Pakistan | Center for Research and Security Studies

Comparative Fatalities from Violence

Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism

Security Personnel - 2013 to 2023



Annual Security Report | 2023 | Pakistan | Center for Research and Security Studies

CROSS-BORDER ENGAGEMENT: AFGHANISTAN

In 2023, CRSS devoted substantial efforts to bolster regional stability by concentrating on Pakistan-Afghanistan bilateral relations. The Beyond Boundaries initiative, supported by the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), played a pivotal role in fostering understanding and collaboration through dialogues involving religious scholars, tribal leaders, civil society members, businesspersons, entrepreneurs, and former government officials. Post Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan and by the end of 2023, this multitrack diplomacy initiative facilitated two religious scholars' dialogues, four tribal leaders' conferences, and three Pak-Afghan stakeholders dialogues on regional peace and stability and geo-economics which included goodwill visits to Kabul and Kandahar.

Simultaneously, the Afghanistan Inclusion Dialogue Initiative (AIDI), funded by the EU, facilitated 4 dialogues, 2 with religious scholars and 2 with civil society members, aiming to bridge gaps, promote inclusivity, and contribute to regional stability.

Engaging religious and tribal stakeholders yielded valuable insights into the post-Taliban dynamics, shaping a clear roadmap for future engagements. These dialogues addressed crucial issues, including girls' education, women's employment rights, regional security, trade and economic connectivity, repatriation of Afghan assets, and humanitarian concerns. Maintaining open channels with non-governmental actors was pivotal for

comprehending and influencing the post-Taliban landscape and promoting cordial ties.

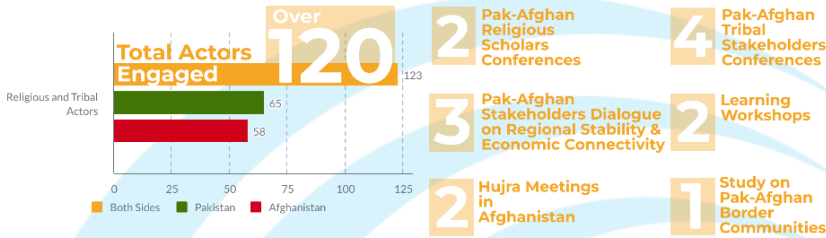
The longstanding Beyond Boundaries initiative, active since 2015, demonstrated adaptability to the changing political landscape in Afghanistan. It effectively tackled pressing issues, including peace and security, trade and economic connectivity, human rights, youth capacity building, political participation, and women's empowerment. The initiative's flexibility and targeted focus played a vital role in fostering understanding and stability in the region.

Tangible outcomes materialized in improved regional stability and reinforced bilateral relations. Post-dialogues, achievements were evidenced through sideline meetings and effective communication with track 1 actors. Examples include a joint statement by religious scholars endorsing girls' education in Afghanistan, the issuance of special cards for border natives, streamlined visa processes for Afghan businesspersons, revised retention days for Afghan containers at Karachi ports, and the establishment of trust with the Afghan government following the culturally-sensitive and politically balanced conversations during and after the Kabul visit.

Beyond Boundaries - At a Glance

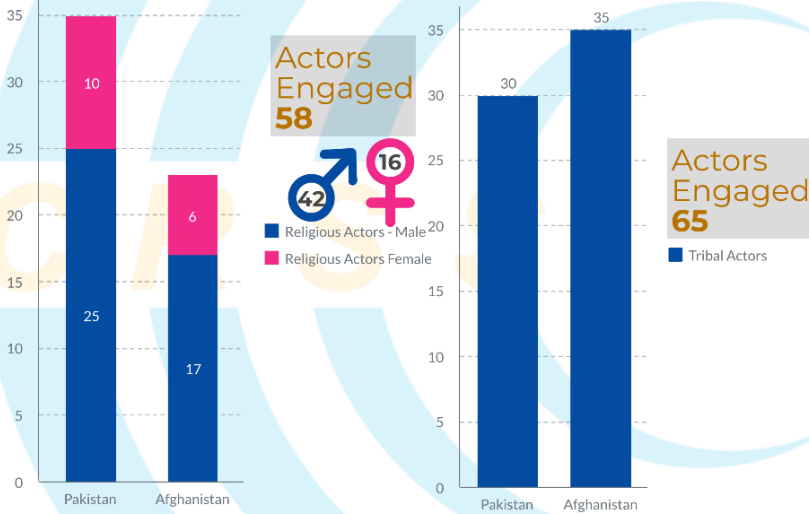
Religious and Tribal Engagement

Actors | Engagements
April 2022 to December 2023



Religious Engagement

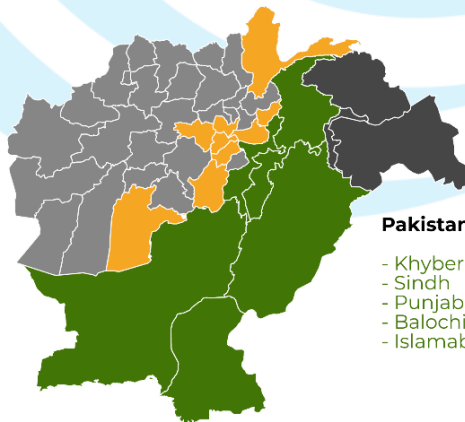
Tribal Engagement



Actors Representation - By Province | Religious Engagement

Afghanistan

- Paktika
- Paktia
- Logar
- Kabul
- Nangarhar
- Wardak
- Badakhshan
- Kunar
- Kandahar



Pakistan

- Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
- Sindh
- Punjab
- Balochistan
- Islamabad

PUBLICATIONS

CRSS's dedicated research component also focused on the Pak-Afghan relationship, assessing issues affecting ties and exploring ways forward. Our Afghanistan-focused publications issued this year include:

“Engaging Religious and Tribal Leaders on Regional Stability and Bilateral Cooperation”: This publication documents the activities and outcomes of the post-August 2021 programming of Beyond Boundaries V, which focused on engaging religious and tribal leaders from Pakistan and Afghanistan to address bilateral issues, including reopening girls' schools, regional stability, and cross-border movement facilitation. The report depicts and analyses the discourse that emanated throughout this phase of engagement, centred on advocacy for solutions to crucial issues, fostering trust with stakeholders, and promoting peace and cooperation between the two countries. The publication highlights the significance of involving religious and tribal actors in addressing regional challenges and presents recommendations for future collaboration and diplomacy efforts.

“A Qualitative Study of Pak-Afghan Border Communities”: It is a qualitative study focused on Pak-Afghan border communities, particularly in the Chaman-Spin Boldak and Torkham-Jalalabad regions. Through in-depth interviews, the research explores various aspects of daily life, including gender roles, economy, religious and cultural dynamics, governance, peace and stability, and state services. Its findings underscore the necessity of targeted interventions to tackle terrorism, improve education and

healthcare systems, empower youth and women, and enhance cross-border trade for sustainable development and peace in the region.

“A Critical Review of Taliban Rule: August 2021 – December 2023”: This research report provides an in-depth and objective perspective on the Taliban rule in Afghanistan following the Ghani administration's collapse and U.S. and NATO troops' withdrawal in August 2021. It gives a holistic picture of various domains such as governance, international relations, human rights, public health, economics, security, education, and public services. Through interviews and extensive research, it depicts the daily experiences of Afghans, particularly focusing on notable cultural and societal shifts. The report also highlights significant developments, including the reduced participation of women in various spheres, the closure of educational institutions for girls, the evolving role of religious leaders in supporting female education, restrictions on freedom of expression, rising unemployment, media censorship, security issues, governance challenges, treatment of minority groups, the effectiveness of economic measures, etc. Overall, it aims to offer a comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics of Taliban rule in Afghanistan, providing valuable insights for decision-makers and stakeholders

Overall, CRSS's cross-border programming and research in 2023 showcased a commitment to fostering understanding and stability through dialogue, collaboration, and academic understanding of the issues translating into mainstream discourse.





Beyond Boundaries

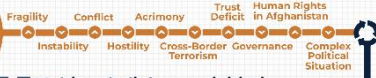
Religious and Tribal/ Cultural Engagement | 2023-25

Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS) - Roadmap

At a Glance

PROBLEMS

Pak-Afghan Relationship



ACTION IDENTIFIED

Outcome Oriented Pathways

Multitrack diplomacy initiative that Heightens stakes for peace and cooperation between Pakistan and Afghanistan through greater connectivity, interdependence and trust at different levels of relationship.

WAY OUT

Impact Oriented

Track 2 Stakeholders Engaged

Track 1 Stakeholders Influenced

To harness the multitrack diplomacy potential of religious, tribal and cultural stakeholders from Pakistan and Afghanistan - as track 2 actors most relevant and influential in the post August 15, 2021 environment.

To Address:
- Contentious issues
- Lessen fragility
- Promote trust and cooperation

To Influence:
- Stable Afghanistan
- Inclusive Governance
- Respect for human rights, education and freedoms



Feeder Mechanism

To identify issues of concern to border communities across Pakistan and Afghanistan and feed them into religious, tribal and cultural actors' track 2 dialogues as subjects key to border stability.

Track 1.5/2 Dialogues

To engage Pakistani and Afghan religious, tribal and cultural stakeholders in track 1.5/2 dialogues at the provincial and federal level on both sides, focused on the issues of contention and concern as part of different areas of relationship.

Advocacy Meetings

To engage Pakistani and Afghan state actors through advocacy meetings on the sidelines of track 1.5/2 dialogues, disseminate policy recommendations on the mutually concerning issues and positively influence track 1 diplomacy.

Amplified Messaging

To amplify positive messaging on contentious issues between Pakistan and Afghanistan through the dissemination of positive discourse - generated by the religious, tribal and cultural stakeholders - on digital media platforms.

Tribal Engagement | By Districts

- Pakistan**
- Peshawar
 - Khyber
 - Ferozpur
 - Faisalabad
 - Rawalpindi
 - Islamabad
 - Lahore
 - Multan
 - Sindh
 - Balochistan
 - Gilgit-Baltistan
 - Northern Areas
- Afghanistan**
- Badakshan
 - Faryab
 - Herat
 - Kandahar
 - Kapisa
 - Lagar
 - Logar
 - Nangarhar
 - Paktia
 - Paktika
 - Parwan
 - Samangan
 - Takhar
 - Wardak
 - Zabul

Religious Engagement | By Province



TARGET REPRESENTATION
based on our existing constituency

- Country
- Region
- Tribe

ACTORS

Tribal Engagement | By Tribes

- Pakistan**
- Ashkezi
 - Jhuzai
 - Kakar
 - Sahiwal
 - Chohan
 - Noduzai
 - Sahiwal
 - Muzai
- Afghanistan**
- Aduzai
 - Jhuzai
 - Kakar
 - Khegani
 - Muzai and others

2023 through 2025



Council of Islamic Ideology

As Pakistan's constitutional body, the CII has already provided us with a letter of support for the proposed initiative.

Wifaq ul Madaris

A federation of seminaries highly respected by the Taliban, their involvement in our efforts further enhances our advantageous position.

Dar ul Uloom Haqqania

This institution holds high reverence among the Taliban, and their collaboration with us strengthens our position.

Organization for Economic Studies and Peace (OESP)

Our Afghan partner/ counterpart!



MIDDLE EAST

In response to shifting Middle East geopolitics, CRSS dedicated the latter part of 2023 to unraveling the complexities of the Israel-Hamas conflict that not only inflicts adversity on Palestinians but also poses global implications, as highlighted by the World Bank's warnings of potential challenges in commodity markets.

The roundtable discussion combined with interviews of experts on the issue emphasized the paradoxical stances of key decision-makers, transforming the conflict into a global turning point. Insights revealed the conflict's roots in the persistent marginalization of Palestinians. The discourse underscored the need for a two-state solution, criticized the lack of concern among Muslim nations, and warned against aligning with expansionist powers.

Experts underlined the need for advocating for recalibrated foreign policies, diplomatic solutions, and a renewed commitment to peace, indicating a potential pathway forward for resolving the intricate Middle East conflict.



CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

In a parallel focus on climate, CRSS conducted a comprehensive study titled "Climate-Induced Security Threats to Pakistan." The research highlighted Pakistan's vulnerability to climate risks, with the aftermath of extreme weather events causing significant economic and societal damage.

The findings underscored the severe impacts of global warming on water and food security, rural-urban migration, rising crime rates, and political instability. The report provided detailed policy recommendations, emphasizing climate-resistant infrastructure, disaster preparedness, urban planning, water management, and social safety nets to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change.

Overall, the report aimed to underscore the urgency of addressing climate change as a fundamental threat, emphasizing the need for sound policymaking and implementation by key stakeholders. The study provided a comprehensive overview of the multifaceted challenges posed by climate change in Pakistan and outlined strategic measures to build resilience and sustainability.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Women empowerment remained at the heart of our thematic focus this year, exemplified by an international gathering of women leaders from Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, Indonesia, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. In the virtual consultation, titled "Women's Rights in Afghanistan – Regional Perspectives and Role of Islamic World," CRSS aimed to highlight the enduring struggles faced by Afghan women amid war and political turmoil. The discussions passionately urged the eradication of archaic notions, the empowerment of women, and their active inclusion in decision-making processes for global peace and prosperity. Voices from various nations resonated in advocating for education, economic empowerment, and diplomatic pressure to safeguard Afghan women's rights globally. The diplomatic community from the US, UK, EU, and Australia virtually expressed solidarity. The forum emphasized a comprehensive approach, including online education, economic empowerment, and diplomatic pressure on the Taliban. It underscored the importance of addressing mental well-being and proposing innovative solutions to connect Afghan women to global markets, highlighting the necessity of collective efforts at both local and international levels.



YOUTH AND PEACEBUILDING

Youth empowerment and leadership development for peacebuilding also remained a core focus for CRSS in 2023. This year, the Center concluded a year-long youth leadership development initiative titled Paving Pathways to Social Cohesion, supported by the Australian Government’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). Its story began in May 2022 with a few basic questions that sprang from a review of CRSS’s decade-and-a-half-long journey in CVE-related interventions.

- A. How can a CVE-focused youth development initiative be more innovative and participatory – away from the conventional classroom seminar/training approaches, and exclude one-to-many lectures?
- B. How can the physical/ primary engagement with the youth not just be an end, but instead, used as a means to an end where the discussion had in the physical space among 20 or 30 people goes far beyond the room and transits from offline to online medium.
- C. Who are the societal gatekeepers to protect against the threats of extremism, who i) have access to a large cross-section of the community, especially youth, ii) boast the capacity to look at and interpret the issues of peace and coexistence through a critical thinking paradigm, and iii) can promote a positive social discourse – anchored in democratic values – as an alternative to the extremist narrative?

These questions gave birth to the Paving Pathways to Social Cohesion, to innovatively approach CVE, where:

- I. Original CVE-focused short films were considered as a replacement for the traditional one-to-many lectures and formed the basis for discussion during the primary engagement.
- II. Video content - based on physical activities - was considered as an end through dissemination on digital media platforms such as YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook, to reach thousands and not just the audience primarily engaged, and
- III. Public and private sector universities across Pakistan were considered as important institutional actors, for the nomination of faculty members as the direct beneficiaries of the initiative.

The initiative achieved great quantitative and qualitative results including:

1. Production of four original short films on core project themes such as i) Equality, Diversity and Tolerance Perspectives, ii) Women Rights and Empowerment, iii) Challenges to Peacebuilding, and iv) Rule of Law and Accessible Justice.
2. Partnerships with over 50 public and private sector universities across Pakistan to get exclusive access to and engage young faculty members as direct beneficiaries of the initiative.
3. Five workshops held as part of primary engagement (four provincial and a federal chapter), participated by 111 young faculty members.

4. Alumni's outreach to over 800 students and fellow faculty members - through on-campus message multiplication activities on social cohesion, post participation in workshops.
5. Dissemination of four short films and video content resulting from the five chapters of workshops on digital media platforms got impressive traction, reaching nearly 32,000 viewers in the cyberspace.



Secondly, the focus on youth empowerment was also evident in an interactive workshop organized under Global UGRAD's community development initiative at the Afghan Studies Center - an independent CRSS initiative fostering regional peace and people-to-people connectivity between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The session aimed to provide practical insights into community development for Afghan refugees and marginalized Pakistani youth. Focused on social enterprises, participants

explored their potential for sustainable community development and delved into the significance of leadership in social innovation. The workshop facilitated a brainstorming session, fostering collaboration and idea-sharing among participants. Diverse perspectives emerged, creating a space for shared objectives and aspirations between Afghan refugees and Pakistani youth. A participant expressed, “The workshop highlighted the value of working together.” In essence, the event equipped participants with knowledge and connections to actively contribute to community upliftment.

At a Glance

Paving Pathways to Social Cohesion

May 2022 through April 2023

The Theory

Our Pathways of Change

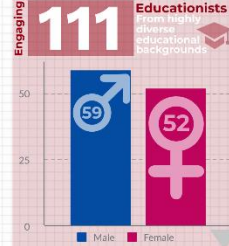
To minimize space for motivated narratives with the help of a network of young Pakistani leaders with critical thinking skills.

Outcome 1
Enhanced capacity of young faculty leaders to interpret and refute extremist narratives through application of critical thinking skills.

Outcome 2
Amplified messaging on core themes: disseminating on digital media platforms the positive social discourse resulting from the engagements as part of outcome 1.

Faculty Members Workshop Series

05 Chapters Across Pakistan



Screening

04

Originally Produced Short Films

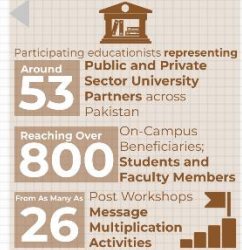


On Equality, Diversity & Tolerance

On Women Empowerment

On Rule of Law, Indiscriminate Access to Law and Justice

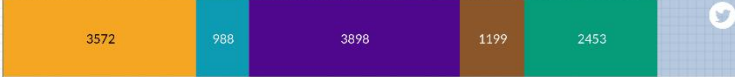
On Challenges to Peacebuilding



Cyber Space Outreach

Brief Digital Videos | Panel Discussions | Short-Films

Brief Digital Videos - Twitter

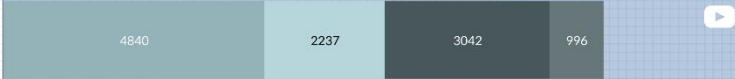


At least **32K** Total Views

Panel Discussions - YouTube



Short Films - YouTube



Number of Views



Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



ASIA WATCH

Asia Watch, CRSS's independent initiative launched in 2022 (available on the official website), continued to provide in-depth coverage and analysis of various aspects related to South Asia, with a particular focus on China and its regional issues, this year. Its thematic focus includes:

- South Asia: A comprehensive coverage of political, economic, and social developments in the region.
- China-South Asia Relations: Relationship between South Asian countries and China, covering diplomatic, economic, and strategic aspects.
- China's Regional Strategy: China's geopolitical approach with other countries in the region.
- Dynamics of China-U.S. ties: Analysis of the ongoing tension between China and the United States, primarily concerning the status of Taiwan.
- China's Regional-Strategic Alliances: Study of China's partnerships in the region i.e. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and their importance.

In addition, Asia Watch produced informative and engaging digital videos to convey insights on the core themes, along with interviews with lead experts and researchers, both within Pakistan and internationally, to provide diverse perspectives on the subjects.

PUBLICATIONS

- i) What Lies Behind the Iron Brotherhood?: Authored by Mr. Imtiaz Gul, Executive Director, CRSS, published in English and Urdu languages, in which he argues that the fundamentals of the multi-faceted cooperation between Pakistan and China are firmly rooted in trust and an enduring convergence of interests. He looks at possible challenges in the future and ways to further reinforce bilateral relations between the two countries. The book highlights the exceptionally warm and historic relations between the two countries which have remained constant and strong over more than six decades in a changing political and economic regional and global environment.
- ii) CPEC - An Explainer: This report was an endeavor to clear some of the fog around CPEC by briefly tracing the history of Pakistan-China relations and addressing some of the most frequently asked questions around CPEC.

ECONOMY

A comprehensive study titled "Rethinking Pakistan's Economy" was conducted by CRSS, this year. The research shed light on Pakistan's complex economic landscape as well as several pressing issues that pose substantial challenges to the country's development.

The report highlighted the external events that result from natural disasters, geopolitics, security issues, and instances like the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted the normal pattern of the economy and left uncertainty. Concurrently, high inflation rates, depreciation of the Pakistani rupee, trade balances, and overall economic instability, necessitate careful monetary management.

The report identified multifaceted issues that demand synchronized efforts from the government, the central bank, and all stakeholders. It recommended that effective policies to control inflation, promote exports, attract investments, and strengthen fiscal management, must be deftly woven into a comprehensive strategy that can set Pakistan on the path of progress.

VISION 2024

As we step into 2024, the Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS) envisions making small but meaningful contributions for the future marked by enhanced regional stability, sustainable development, and a more secure and interconnected world. Our vision for the year 2024 is guided by our commitment to fostering understanding, collaboration, and dialogue in critical areas that impact national and global peace and security.

Global Peace through Regional Cooperation: CRSS aims to play a pivotal role in promoting peace and stability by facilitating regional dialogues and cooperation. Building on the success of initiatives like Beyond Boundaries and AIDI, we aspire to expand our cross-border engagements, fostering mutual understanding and collaboration between nations facing shared challenges.

Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Peace: Recognizing the potential of the youth as catalysts for change, CRSS envisions further investment in youth empowerment initiatives. We aim to continue innovative programs like Paving Pathways to Social Cohesion, fostering a generation actively involved in promoting peace, tolerance, and inclusivity.

Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resilience: In response to the growing threats posed by climate change, CRSS commits to further research and advocacy in the field. Our vision includes actively contributing to research and promoting sustainable practices to mitigate the impact of climate change on security and socio-economic stability.

Women's Rights and Empowerment: The core theme of women empowerment remains central to CRSS's vision. We aspire to continue providing platforms for global leaders to address challenges faced by women, especially in conflict zones. Our commitment includes ongoing efforts to amplify the voices of women and advocate for their rights on regional and international platforms.

In-Depth Analysis and Insightful Research: CRSS aims to uphold its reputation as a credible research institution by providing timely, insightful, and policy-relevant analyses. Our vision includes expanding Asia Watch, Security Reports, and similar initiatives, offering in-depth coverage and analysis of critical regional issues, with a particular focus on China and its geopolitical relationships.

Economic Stability and Resilience: Recognizing the importance of a stable economy in ensuring overall security, CRSS envisions continued efforts to rethink and contribute to Pakistan's economic landscape. We aim to provide recommendations and insights that contribute to effective economic policies, addressing challenges, and fostering sustainable development.

As we look ahead to 2024, CRSS remains dedicated to its mission of promoting peace, understanding, and collaboration. Our vision reflects a commitment to addressing the complex challenges of our time through research, dialogue, and advocacy, contributing to a safer and more prosperous world for all.

The Center

CRSS Background

The Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS) is a think tank/advocacy center launched in September, 2007. Founded by noted security expert and media personality Imtiaz Gul, it is committed to the cause of independent research, nonpartisan analysis, and informed advocacy.

As an advocacy center, CRSS is dedicated to trigger critical thinking through discourse anchored in global democratic values such as socio-political diversity, rule of law, equal citizenry, and acceptance of diversity, fundamental human rights, all at the intersection of empirical research in security studies.

Core Values

CRSS strives to embed the national conversation in constitutionalism, and rationalize it over extremism and sectarianism. CRSS believes the path to peace is through embodying fundamental human rights, specifically:

- strict adherence to the rule of law, and stringent implementation
- informing the public on civic education, especially good governance and public accountability
- promoting equal rights for all citizens of Pakistan
- championing women empowerment
- providing training and opportunities to youth to veer them away from radicalization through critical thinking

CRSS' programming reflects its core values, which CRSS believes can, along with time-tested methodologies in strategic communications, impactful message development, research and advocacy result in a more tolerant and cohesive Pakistan.

Center For Research & Security Studies

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