



Pak-Afghan Youth Jirga

Concept Note

Pak-Afghan Youth Forum (PAYF) in collaboration with Youth Organization of Pakistan (YOP) is organizing an online Youth Jirga entitled “**Building Bridges for a Shared Future**” on **20th August 2024 at 04:00 pm PST**. The geopolitical dynamics in the Pak-Afghan region have undergone a significant transformation since the takeover Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. This shift presents both challenges and opportunities for Pak-Afghan regional connectivity, economic cooperation, and diplomatic relations. The importance of fostering strong ties between Pakistan and Afghanistan has never been more critical, with the youth playing a pivotal role in shaping the future of this relationship.

Pak-Afghan Youth Jirga aims to bring together youth leaders, diplomats, and sectoral experts to explore opportunities for enhancing regional connectivity and promoting deeper collaboration between Pakistan and Afghanistan. This discussion will be structured across three tiers—youth/public diplomacy, state-level diplomacy, and sectoral cooperation—focusing on key sectors such as mining, trade, and infrastructure development.

Objectives

- Youth/Public Diplomacy:** Encourage youth-led initiatives that enhance cultural exchange and mutual understanding between Pakistan and Afghanistan.
- State-Level Diplomacy:** Strengthen diplomatic efforts to address security, border management, and political cooperation.
- Sectoral Cooperation:** Explore collaboration opportunities in mining, trade, and infrastructure to boost economic growth and regional stability.

Expected Outcomes: In the post-IEA takeover context:

- Enhanced understanding of the potential for Pak-Afghan regional connectivity at various levels, with actionable recommendations for youth engagement, public diplomacy, and sectoral cooperation.
- Identification of key areas for collaboration between Pakistan and Afghanistan, focusing on mutual benefits and sustainable development.
- Strengthened bilateral relations through youth-led initiatives, expert insights, and collaborative projects that align with regional and global goals.



Structure of the Online Jirga

- **Duration:** 1 Hour
- **Opening Remarks (10 minutes):** Overview of the theme and objectives by representatives from the Pak-Afghan Youth Forum and Youth Organization Pakistan.
- **Tentative Time & Date:** 04:00 – 05:00 pm PST, 20th August, 2024.

A one-hour online Jirga structured in three tiers:

- **Tier 1: Youth Perspective (10 minutes)**
 - **Youth-led discussions** on cross-border interactions, cultural exchange, education, employment opportunities, and the importance of using communication corridor for effective dialogue.
 - **Challenges** faced by youth in border areas, including security concerns, economic hardships, and access to resources.
 - **Innovative ideas** for youth-driven initiatives, such as social enterprises, volunteer programs, digital platforms, and communication campaigns.
- **Tier 2: Policy and Governance (10 minutes)**
 - **Discuss Security and Border Management** strategies for improving border security, counterterrorism efforts, and managing cross-border movement.
 - **Expert analysis of Regional Cooperation Frameworks:** Analyze the role of regional organizations like SAARC and ECO in enhancing bilateral and multilateral ties.
 - **Policy recommendations** for enhancing bilateral cooperation, including visa facilitation, trade liberalization, infrastructure development, and the progress that has been made since August 15, 2024.
- **Tier 3: Sectoral Focus (10 minutes)**
 - **In-depth discussions** on the potential of specific sectors, such as mining, energy, agriculture, and tourism, and the role of a communication corridor in facilitating cross-border trade and investment.
 - **Identification of investment opportunities** and challenges related to infrastructure, technology, human capital development, and the need for improved communication networks.
 - **Public-private partnerships** to promote joint ventures, knowledge sharing, and the development of communication infrastructure.
- **Q&A Session (5 minutes):** Interactive session with the audience to address questions and gather feedback.

This online Jirga serves as a timely platform for dialogue and collaboration, bringing together youth, experts, and policymakers from Pakistan and Afghanistan. By focusing on the crucial aspects of regional connectivity in 2024, this initiative aims to lay the foundation for a more integrated and prosperous future, where both nations can work together to overcome challenges and seize opportunities in a rapidly changing world.



Tentative List of Panelists

Panelists	Designation & Country
Dr. Zia ur Rehman	<i>Peace & Political Activist (Afghanistan)</i>
Hedayatullah Patkin	<i>Deputy Director Foreign Affairs (Afghanistan)</i>
Manahil Baz	<i>Vice President YOP Federal Cabinet (Pakistan)</i>
Zakir Khan	<i>Chief Secretary YOP (Pakistan)</i>
Zakriya Khan	<i>Secretary Technology YOP Khyber Pakhtunkhawa (Pakistan)</i>
Eman Taj	<i>Campus Head YOP - University of Haripur (Pakistan)</i>
Muhammad Akhtar	<i>Law Student from QAU (Pakistan)</i>

Moderation

Mahroosha Khan
Research Associate PAYF

Khadija Naeem
General Secretary YOP Islamabad