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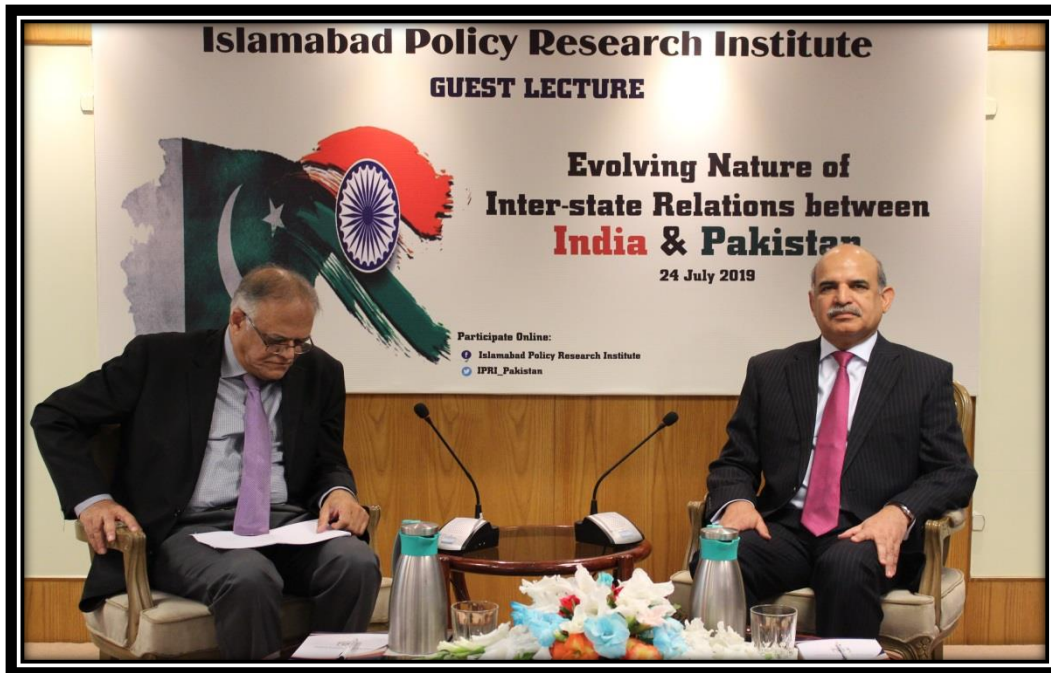


### **PRESS RELEASE**

**24 July 2019**

***“Without passing the buck – the onus for improved inter-state relations between Pakistan and India, primarily falls on India.”***

- Senator Javed Jabbar



“Two immediate neighbours –Pakistan and India- with inherently contrasting, often conflictual personas will continue to face dynamic tension. Regional and global geopolitical factors, especially the role of China and the US, will likely to have greater impact on this relationship. For the near term future, Pakistan will have to learn to manage its tense relationship with India without war, violent conflict, subversion, hate and follow a course towards improved unconditional dialogue, trade, travel, connectivity, and cooperation.”

These were some of the thoughts and reflections of former Senator Javed Jabbar, a prominent writer, filmmaker, policy analyst, and former Federal Minister of Pakistan at the Guest Lecture series of the Islamabad Policy Research Institute here in Islamabad, today.

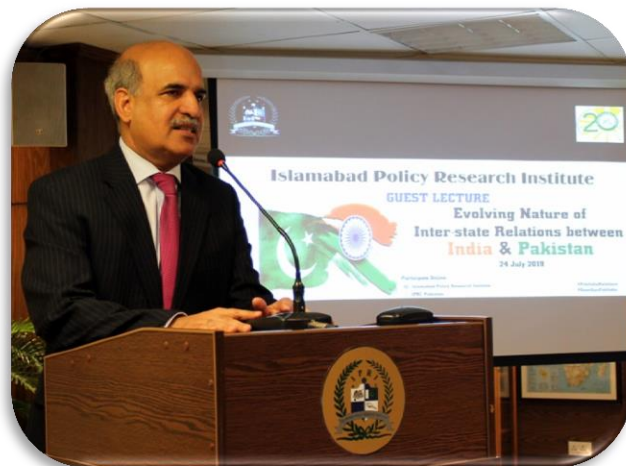
Senator Jabbar, who has been associated with peace and conflict resolution initiatives between Pakistan and India as a member of the longest-running Pakistan-India Track-II process known as the Neemrana Dialogue, observed that the Pakistan-India is “possibly the most complex bilateral relationship of any two nation-states.

There are no two other nations in the entire world with such multilayered complexities as found between India and Pakistan.” Outlining how the people have a long history together, he said that there are also great differences among them which are now being manipulated and driven by a hysterical Indian media. He censured the absolute insanity of the Indian news channels in fanning the flames of mistrust and hatred between the neighbours.

The lecture, entitled “*Evolving Nature of Inter-State Relations between Pakistan and India*” covered a range of topics including the meeting of Prime Minister Imran Khan with US President Donald Trump, impact and often nefarious use of media by India, and the future state of relations between Pakistan and India. The conversation was moderated by IPRI President Ambassador (Retd.) Khan Hasham bin Saddique.

Giving his views about the recent Lok Sabha elections, Senator Jabbar hoped that the 64 per cent of Indian voters who voted against the BJP/alliance in 2019 would move the Indian

polity towards more rationale policies which are beneficial for the region and Pakistan-India relations. “While Pakistan needs to do plenty itself through internal reform and rejuvenation, we’ve made enough peace gestures, we must now wait for India to realize that the longer it waits, the stronger will be the empathy towards Pakistan,” he stressed.



On the reaction of the Indian government regarding recent comments by President Trump regarding acting as a mediator between Pakistan and India, Senator Jabbar opined that Pakistan “should not act hyper-sensitively, we should play it cool. While this is a major breakthrough for us, we need to be cautious about talking this offer by President Trump at its face value. India’s bilateralism is akin to bullyism. But, we are fortunate that, at least, in South Asia, Pakistan is the sole country that can challenge India’s hegemony.” He lamented that given the global negative image, “we need to engage more multi-dimensionally with the world.” The government needs to make substantial financial investment to improve global, regional and Indian perceptions about Pakistan, he urged.



On the issue of Kashmir and the future, Senator Jabbar strongly urged Prime Minister Imran Khan and Prime Modi to immediately re-initiate secret back channel talks in order to make more robust use of Track 1. He also called for “continuation/invigoration of the quiet, non-media-reported Track 2 processes,” along with cultural exchanges and sports. “Ease-of-travel a la Kartarpur was a responsible and very positive step by Pakistan,” he remarked. “If India wants to present itself as a great potential global power, it will need to show that it can live in peace with all its neighbour, including Pakistan. For both countries, this bilateral relationship is extremely important and deserves continuous work through both official diplomacy and public diplomacy,” he stressed.

Earlier welcoming the eminent speaker, diplomats, senior academics, students and media channels, President of IPRI Ambassador (Retd.) Khan Hasham bin Saddique said that the evolving nature of inter-state relations between India and Pakistan require careful deliberation for the formulation of prudent policies which can benefit relations between both states and the welfare of their people. He highlighted that unfortunately under the Modi administration, India has gone **“from strategic restraint to preemption.”** The increasingly belligerent attitude of the Indian state and society has never been this confrontational in terms of singleness of purpose against Pakistan. “So, we are likely in for more challenging times for this relationship,” he predicted.



A lively Question-Answer session followed the talk. Responding to a question, Senator Jabbar said that the virus of Hindutva was now firmly embedded into different parts of the Indian society and the consequences of this have been terrible. In response to another question, he said that Pakistanis should use social media in non-confrontational ways not just to counter Indian vitriol, but to also improve the country's image abroad.

