

## India-Pakistan Regional Young Leaders Initiative

### *Inaugural Class of Fellows*



**Ahmad Rafay Alam** is a lawyer and environmental activist. He has a decade's experience in civil and corporate litigation throughout Pakistan and, last year, took leave as Senior Associate at one of the country's largest law firms in order to serve as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Lahore Electric Supply Company. Although he continues his private practice, his current focus is to improve the efficiency of Pakistan's largest electricity distribution company. Rafay also teaches a course on environmental law and regulation and property law at the Law & Policy Department of the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS). At

LUMS, he is also the coordinator of the Environment and Natural Resource Cluster of the Development Policy Research Center (DPRC), which is about to begin a Canadian \$500,000 three-year project in partnership with WWF-Pakistan to study the effects of climate change on food security in 10 districts of Pakistan. He is also the coordinator of the LUMS Water Program, which was established in 2009 to act as a platform for Track-II diplomacy on water issues between India and Pakistan. Last year, he was project leader of a one-year trans-boundary water study with the New Delhi-based Observer Research Foundation. Rafay continues to conduct public interest litigations pro bono.



**Ziad Bashir** is Director of Gul Ahmed Textile Mills, one of the oldest and largest textile mills in Pakistan. In 2004 he became the Chairman of Arwen Tech, an IT company specializing in system integration, and in 2008 he transitioned from eight years as Chief Executive of Swisstex Chemicals Pvt to the company's Chairman. Ziad still holds both positions and is actively involved in several trade associations, such as LATI (having served as both chairman and vice chairman) and LITE, as well as various business forums, including the Pakistan-Italy Business Forum and the Pakistan-Japan Business Forum. He has served on the Central Managing

Committee and is currently on the Executive Committee of APTMA (All Pakistan Textile Mills Association). Ziad is also a member of the ITMF spinners committee. He serves on the Board of Governors of AISEC, the world's largest student organization providing an international platform for youth to discover and develop their potential to positively impact society. He was Chairman of a Senate Committee regarding Environmental Action from 2006-2007. In addition, Ziad has been a member of the Young Presidents' Organization (YPO) since 2004, within which he has served on the Pakistan Chapter's Board of Governors since 2005 and as Chapter Chair from 2009-2010. Ziad graduated from Babson College in 1998 with a BSc degree in Entrepreneurial Studies and a concentration in History.



**Zafar Iqbal Choudhary** is a journalist and policy analyst who has engaged in various tracks of civil society dialogues on Jammu and Kashmir in recent years, with the aim of enhancing interactions and understandings between New Delhi-Srinagar, New Delhi-Islamabad, and Srinagar-Muzaffarabad. The most significant achievement of these initiatives has been the formation of a Joint Chamber—the first-ever Cross-LoC collaborative institution arrived at through a written agreement between eleven business organizations drawn from five regions of Jammu and Kashmir on both sides of the Line of Control. With support from Conciliation Resources, based in London, Zafar partnered with a counterpart in Pakistan-administered Kashmir to facilitate its formation. The Joint Chamber has recently chosen its first President by way of elections that Zafar had the opportunity to conduct as part of the larger process.



**Sarath Babu Elumalai** is the Founder & CEO of FOODKING. Born and raised in a slum in Madipakkam in Chennai, Sarath Babu is not ignorant of difficulties and poverty. He cites his mother as a most successful entrepreneur who brought up her kids while working several jobs, and he is a person from whom we can take lessons. Sarath Babu completed his education at King's Matriculation Higher Secondary School in Chennai and graduated from BITS Pilani with a degree in Chemical Engineering. He worked at Polaris Software for three years and pursued his MBA at the Indian Institute of Management - Ahmedabad (IIM-A). It was after his MBA in 2006 that he started Food King, a catering service. Sarath Babu's vision was to offer employment to illiterate and semiliterate people through Food King. One of his most significant achievements was becoming an Honorary Rotarian, and he also won the CNN-IBN Award for Young Indian Leader 2011, the RITZ Chennai Youth Icon 2010, and many more youth awards. A real icon for the youth in India who represents success in the face of hardship, Sarath Babu believes in putting values before money and power.



**Menaka Guruswamy** is an advocate in New Delhi. She was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University, a Gammon Fellow at Harvard Law School, and a gold medalist from the National Law School of India. She holds law degrees from all three schools, with a focus on Constitutional Law and Public International Law. Menaka has practiced at the Office of the Attorney General of India, the highest office that represents the federal government in the Supreme Court of India. She has also worked in New York as an associate at Davis Polk & Wardwell, a large American law firm where her primary area of practice was commercial law. In addition, Menaka has been a consultant for the United Nations Development Program and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), advising both on law reform. This past year, Menaka was an Assistant Professor at New York University School of Law. Menaka presently lives in New Delhi, where she practices law and focuses on constitutional law scholarship and litigation. She is an Asia Society Asia 21 Fellow, Class of 2008.



**Abid Hussain Imam** is an Assistant Professor of Law & Policy at the Lahore University of Management Sciences. Previously, he worked at the Ministry of Commerce and the Competition Commission of Pakistan in Islamabad, providing technical legal expertise to both institutions. His academic interests include international and regional trade law, aspects of public international law, constitutional law, and the interaction between Islamic and secular legal regimes. He has written about some of these issues and others in the press. Abid is also currently working on research consulting projects related to the analysis of the legal and economic landscape of bilateral trade between India and Pakistan, as well as on the typology and development of political parties in Pakistan. He is a shareholder of and a member of the Board of Directors of Lahore Grammar School, a system of private schools that provides quality progressive education to over 30,000 students across

Pakistan. The school system also has pioneered a three-tiered model of school for elite and lower-middle class students, and has provided free education to need-based students. He also is a member of the boards of several non-governmental organizations including the Lahore-based ASR, which focuses on women's empowerment in the context of peace and conflict issues. Abid received his JD from Columbia University School of Law in 2005 and a BA from Yale University in 1998.



**Sehar Iqbal** is Co-founder & Partner of Green Ink Consultants and Chairperson of the Nasheman Welfare Society. Her life and work have been shaped profoundly by growing up amidst the Kashmir conflict. She is a prominent social worker and youth organizer who has spent the last eight years working with women and youth in Kashmir and elsewhere, focusing on improving their access to healthcare, education and employment. Much of her work involves community-based programs that enable the collective construction of essential community infrastructure like footpaths, sanitation units and housing for the vulnerable. Sehar

has completed a master's in Development Studies and International Relations from the University of East Anglia where she was offered a scholarship. Her work experience ranges from projects for the Aga Khan Network, the International Committee of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the Indian Ministry of Rural Development, as well as for Nasheman, a community organization in Kashmir that she runs. Sehar also worked extensively in border areas of North Kashmir after the 2005 South Asia earthquake devastated entire communities there. Her work in Kashmir was recognized by the ruling People's Democratic Party, which offered her a spot on the ticket to contest against a former minister in the 2008 State Assembly elections. Ever since finishing as the runner-up, she has been working with the people of the area through Nasheman. Sehar remains committed to social empowerment through informed politics.



**Munizae Jahangir** is an award-winning TV journalist and documentary filmmaker. She currently works as an Associate Executive Producer and Special Correspondent for Pakistan's Express media group, reporting and anchoring for its Urdu TV channel and English daily, *The Express Tribune*. She also anchors a current affairs evening show twice a week, called *Pakistan Poochta Hain*. Munizae has focused on conflict areas and has produced a documentary on the war in Afghanistan and a series of reports from Pakistan's troubled Northwest, where the army is fighting Taliban and Al Qaeda militants. She has hosted debates

between India and Pakistan in times of tension, and she was the first Pakistani to work for an Indian television network (NDTV) as a country correspondent. Her work for NDTV included *The Baloch Battlefield* about the insurgency in Balochistan and *Pakistan: The War Within*, a series of half-hour documentaries on the militancy in Pakistan's Northwest and South Punjab. Munizae has interviewed high profile political leaders, including US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Senator John Kerry, former Prime Ministers of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto and Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, Sanam Bhutto, Prime Minister Yousaf R Gilani, President Asif Zardari, Imran Khan, MQM leader Altaf Hussain and Baloch leader Nawab Akbar Bugti. Jahangir received her BA in Political Science from McGill University and her MA in Media Studies from the New School University in New York. She is also an alumna of Harvard's Executive Program at the Kennedy school. Munizae produced and directed the award-winning documentary *Search for Freedom*, as well as *Across the LOC: Kashmir*, a documentary on Indian-administered Kashmir, and *Awamnama*, a docudrama based on the current political scenario in Pakistan. She was honored as a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum in 2008.



**Mekhala Krishnamurthy** is an anthropologist and development practitioner. Over the last decade, Mekhala has built a career at the intersections of research, grassroots fieldwork, and development policy and practice. From 2003-2007, Mekhala coordinated the Health Practice at the Social Initiatives Group, a strategic grant-making unit within ICICI Bank, India's largest private sector bank. Over the last few years, she has focused on understanding the workings of India's agricultural markets. Based on eighteen months of ethnographic fieldwork, her doctoral research spans three decades of rural transformation in the social, economic and political lives of an agricultural market (*mandi*) town in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. Building on this work, she is currently completing a book manuscript and developing a comparative, policy research project on agricultural commodity markets and their regulation. Mekhala serves on the Executive Committee of Samaj Pragati Sahayog (SPS), one of the largest grassroots initiatives for water and livelihood security in India. She is also on the faculty of the Young India Fellowship, a new Liberal Arts and leadership programme for talented and committed Indian graduates selected from across the country. Born and raised in Mumbai, Mekhala graduated with an A.B. in Social Studies from Harvard University, an MPhil in Social Anthropology from Cambridge University, and a PhD in Anthropology from University College London. She is currently completing a Postdoctoral Research Fellowship at the Center for the Advanced Study of India (CASI) at the University of Pennsylvania.



**Sabeen Mahmud** is the Founder and Director of PeaceNiche, a not-for-profit organization based in Karachi that promotes democratic discourse and conflict resolution through intellectual and cultural engagement within and beyond the premises of its multipurpose space, called The Second Floor (T2F). A social entrepreneur committed to the intersection of the liberal arts, technology, and activism, Sabeen has created a hub for creative expression in the chaotic, troubled port city of Karachi. T2F has become a meeting place and playground for poets, writers, artists, bloggers, students, and activists. In the words of leading Pakistani peace activist and physics professor Pervez Hoodbhoy, she has created "the only worthwhile arts and culture center in the city." Sabeen has 20 years of experience in graphic design, new media, and technology and is a co-founder of b.i.t.s., a boutique interactive media and technology consulting firm. She is also a blogger, civil liberties activist, a Founding Member of the All Pakistan Music Conference, the Citizens' Archive of Pakistan, Aman Ittehad (United for Peace), and President of the Karachi Chapter of The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE). She is the Secretary of the Pakistan Chapter of the South Asia Foundation and a key member of Citizens for Democracy, a people's movement that aims to mobilize public opinion against the dangerously rising tide of religious intolerance in Pakistan. Sabeen graduated in 1994 from the Kinnaird College for Women in Lahore.



**Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy** is an Academy Award and Emmy Award-winning documentary filmmaker. Her films include *Saving Face*, *Transgenders: Pakistan's Open Secret*, and *Pakistan's Taliban Generation*, which aired on PBS, Channel 4, CBC, SBS and Arte and was the recipient of the Alfred I Dupont Award as well as an Association for International Broadcasting award. Sharmeen has made over a dozen multi-award-winning films in over 10 countries around the world and was the first non-American to be awarded the Livingston Award for best international reporting. In 2007, Sharmeen was awarded the broadcast Journalist of the Year award in the UK by One World Media for her work in a series of documentary films for Channel 4, which included a film about xenophobia in South Africa *The New Apartheid*. Her other films have been awarded The Overseas Press Club Award, The American Women in Radio and Television Award, The Cine Golden Eagle award and the Banff Rockie Award. Sharmeen's work centers around human rights and women's issues, and she has worked with refugees and marginalized communities

from Saudi Arabia to Syria and from Timor Leste to the Philippines. Sharmeen was born and raised in Karachi, Pakistan, and received a bachelor's degree from Smith College and two master's degrees from Stanford University. She is an Asia Society Asia 21 Fellow, Class of 2011.



**Atman Trivedi** joined the State Department last month as the Chief of Staff and Special Adviser to Assistant Secretary Tom Countryman, who heads the International Security and Nonproliferation Bureau. Atman previously served as Counsel to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (SFRC), advising Senator Kerry for three and a half years on Asia policy. In that capacity, he traveled extensively to South Asia. Atman planned and assisted on all aspects of legislation, nominations, hearings, speeches, op-eds, memoranda, and press releases. He previously advised Senator Kerry on defense policy matters, national security law, and a number of other foreign policy issues. Prior to his time in

Congress, Atman worked as an Associate Attorney at the international law firm of Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP on matters at the intersection of foreign policy, trade, and commerce. He has also served as a National Security Analyst at Science Applications International Corporation on nonproliferation issues and as a Junior Fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Atman has held summer positions at the U.S. State Department on the India desk, the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Government Accountability Office, and also worked at the Council on Foreign Relations, where he is a Term Member. Atman holds a BA in International Relations (minor in Economics) and an MA in International Policy Studies from Stanford University, where he researched nonproliferation issues in South Asia and completed overseas study on South Asian security issues at Oxford University. He received his law degree from Columbia Law School, where he was the recipient of the David Berger Memorial Prize for excellence in the study of international law and a member of the Columbia Law Review.