



# Panel Discussion Prosperity Through Economic Freedom and Research, January 13, 2023



**Organized By:**

**Experts Center for Market and Policy Research (ECMPR), Pakistan**

**Collaborators:**

**Atlas Network USA and**

**Experts in Management & Social Sciences (EMS)**



**Policy Research (ECMPR)**

1/13/2023

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# 8<sup>th</sup> PANEL DISCUSSION PROCEEDINGS

## January 13, 2023

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Experts Center for Market and Policy Research (ECMPR), a subsidiary of the Experts in Management and Social Sciences, registered with Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan, is delighted to issue the proceedings of the Experts Panel Discussion on Prosperity through Economic Freedom and Research, January 13, 2023. The Organizing Committee expresses its sincere gratitude and thanks to all those who participated in the discussion and made the event interesting, informative, and thought provoking.*

The main drive behind this experts' panel discussion was to shed light on the critical aspects (e.g., individual liberty, its role in the economic freedom, economic growth, bridging up the gap between individual inputs and the overall economic prosperity of the country, responsive national approach, political stability, and rule of law) to educate the participants about the existing economic conditions of the country and to give policy recommendations.

The panelists include: **Dr. Atiq ur Rehman**, Director Research, ECMPR; **Ms. Lindy Arsenault**, Training, Manager, Atlas Network, USA; **Prof. Dr. Shahida Wizarat**, Dean College of Economics and Social Development (CESD), Institute of Business Management (IOBM), Karachi, Pakistan; **Mr. Max Matusow**, Training Associate, Atlas Network, USA; **Ms. Sadaf Khan**, Lecturer, Sunway University, Malaysia; **Mr. Atif Shehzad**, Ex-Vice-President Peshawar Chamber of Commerce; and **Dr. Mohamed Ayyub Hassan**, Senior Lecturer, UTM Malaysia.

Besides, the invited keynote speakers, the event was participated by Prof. **Dr. Jahan Bakht**, Vice Chancellor, University of Agriculture Peshawar; **Mr. Malak Khalid**, President Peshawar Chamber of Commerce, **Prof. Dr. Aurangzeb**, Vice Chancellor, Lakky Marwart University; **Mr. Nasir Azam**, UNCR Pakistan.; **Prof. Dr. Wali Rahman**, Sarhad University of Science & IT Peshawar, **Prof. Dr. Shahid Jan**, Islamia College Peshawar, **Dr. Fayaz Ali Shah**, Islamia College Peshawar, **Dr. Mohibullah**, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, **Dr. Sonia Sethi**, Islamia College Peshawar, **Dr. Abid Ahmad**, CECOS University Peshawar, **Dr. Aftab Alam**, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Sheringal Dir Upper; **Prof. Dr. Rashid Ali Shah**, Professor of Sociology, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan; **Dr. Rabia Ishrat**, Assistant Professor, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University Peshawar; **Ms. Najia Aman**, Vice President, Habib Metro Bank; **Mr. Aamir Khalil**, Country President, Pak-US Alumni Network, Pakistan; **Dr. Mirwais Ahmadzai**, Kabul, Afghanistan; and a number of other researchers and representatives from media. The Committee is thankful to all of these for sparing their precious time and adding value to the event.

The panelist thoughtfully discussed many aspects of the theme and questions from the audience were entertained. Detail of the panel discussion, and policy recommendations are part of this report.

This Report carries the gist of the panel discussion and can be accessed from <https://expertsms.org> & <https://ecmpr.org>.

## About Experts Center for Market and Policy Research (ECMPR)

We are a group of experts working with and for youth in maximizing their academic and research potentials aiming at their social and economic well-being. The organization provides technical support to young graduates to become good researchers and entrepreneurs through a variety of interventions, like training, seminars, workshops, and conferences. We also assist PhD/MS students and researchers in acquiring new skills and improving their skills in areas related to designing of research projects, data collection, data analysis and reporting.

This journey started in 2020 just a couple of months after the emergence of COVID-19, when the entire world was in a situation of deep crisis and uncertainty. No one knew when the crisis will end. Academic work, like other socio-economic activities and businesses, had come to a standstill. It will be very pertinent to mention that at that time, the concept of online conferences was not much common in Pakistan and technological options were very limited. Yes, on the international landscape there were some conferences being held online by a number of internationally reputed organizations. However, participation in such events was too expensive, beyond the reach of 99.9 % of the research community in Pakistan. That is why there was an urgent need for a platform for researchers which could fill this gap.

This idea of having a formal organization was conceived on a cup of tea in a dhabba restaurant in Islamabad among the like-minded individuals and thus EMS was founded. It was very soon ready to fill that gap.

It is a matter of great honour for the organization that it has, so far, excluding this panel discussin, organized seven international conferences wherein about 600 articles have been presented by scholars representing 15 countries and 20 disciplines. We made the best use of available technology. Thanks to Google. Their technological platform which is free for all, did never disappointed us.

After the enactment of the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment in the Constitution of Pakistan, provincial governments in Pakistan have been given more autonomy, mandate, powers and resources. However, there hardly exists any systematic mechanism at provincial level to support the provincial governments with independent analysis of their policies so that the quality of their policies be objectively assessed and improvement/changes suggested for a free, open and prosperous Pakistan.

Realizing the critical nature of the existing gap, Experts in Management and Social Sciences (Pvt.) Ltd., set up **Experts Centre for Market ad Policy Research (ECMPR)**. The Centre is tasked to act as an independent policy think tank in Pakistan. The research and

advocacy work of the think tank targets improvement in the quality of public policy at provincial as well as federal level through exploring creative solutions and developing innovative ideas.

The ECMPR is a nonprofit public policy organization based in Peshawar with a coordination office in Islamabad. In future, the ECMPR will consider setting up regional offices in Lahore, Karachi, Quetta, Muzafarabad and Gilgit. However, most of the activities will be conducted online.

The Center has been providing is not only effective but is also low cost. It is for every researcher and is within the reach of everyone. Again, thanks to Google. The Center has been working on developing a sustainable model of sharing, caring, learning and knowledge dissemination. Today the Center is not just a platform but has also evolved into a virtual family of experienced researchers who are always available to support each other.

### **Mission of the ECMPR**

The ECMPR is committed to work for the ideals of liberty, governments with limited interventions, rule of law, free markets and property rights by fostering high quality policy-relevant research, and disseminating the findings widely to decision-makers in the public and private sectors in Pakistan in general and in provinces in particular.

### **Vision of the ECMPR**

The ECMPR envisions public policy making process in the country based on evidence for a free, open and prosperous Pakistan.

### **Core Values**

Our core values are:

- Freedom of thoughts
- Creativity
- Learning
- Dialogue
- Continuous improvement
- Objective thinking
- Collaboration

### **Our Slogan**

Join our hands to empower youth for building a psychologically, economically and socially vibrant and progressive society.

# PANEL DISCUSSION



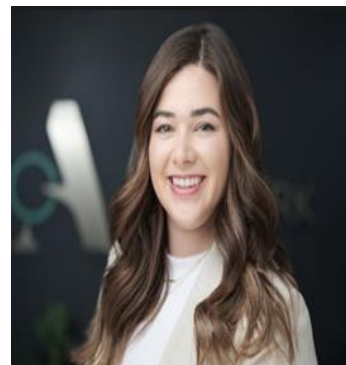
## KEYNOTE SPEAKER I

**Title: Freedom and Development: The Atlas Network Approach**

**Ms. Lindy Arsenault**

**Training, Manager, Atlas Network, USA,**

Lindy is a training manager at Atlas Network. In her job, she designs and manages many of Atlas Network Academy's programs including the MarCom Certification, Executive Accelerator, and Atlas Network's Executive Mentorship Program. She loves working with the international network of partners and creating spaces for thought leaders from around the world to come together and share ideas. Outside the office, Lindy enjoys traveling (her goal is to visit every country in the world), figure skating, and practicing yoga.



### Key Points of her Address and Policy Recommendations

While taking talking on the topic she added that if one wants to bring prosperity one needs to change policy and culture for which she focused on five key areas. These are:

- Entrepreneurship
- Govt. needs to be accountable to the people
- Protection of civil rights
- Free society
- Individual liberty

Lindy further added that local problems can be addressed locally as locals have a more thorough understanding of all the determinants of the problems. For this, local organizations (private sector) need to be encouraged and strengthened for big govts to snatch the liberty and complicate the problems instead of solving them.

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER II

**Title: Education for Growth and Prosperity: A digital Transformation**

**Dr. Sadaf Khan,  
Senior Lecturer, Malaysia,**

Dr. Sadaf Khan holds a PhD in Accounting and Finance from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. Her core expertise is not limited to Auditing, Accounting and Finance but her interest touches the boundaries of behavioural psychology, judgement and decision making. Her dissertation research work is the pioneering work in Pakistan. She has been awarded a fellowship from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia and has been affiliated with the various faculty positions



for 12 years in different national and international universities, including recent affiliation with Sunway Group of Education in Malaysia. She has renewed research contribution to her credit in national and international ABDC ranked journals and conference proceedings. She has been invited as a key note speaker in varied international platform. She has also served as a mentor and judge in mentor mentee matching program in varied platform in USA.

### Key Points of her Address and Policy Recommendations

Dr. Sadaf talked about the need of creating opportunities and digital technological revolution to be treated as enablers. It can help in promoting education, enhancing production, reducing wastages and ameliorating consumer satisfaction. In addition, emerging technologies such as IOT, AI, big data, and cyber security can further help. The core needs in this regard are digital transformation that requires govt support, civil society too and exploring opportunities across the border.

### KEYNOTE SPEAKER III

**Title: Prosperity through Economic Freedom and Research**

**Atif Shehzad,  
Chief Executive, Makkah Agency,  
Uniliver Pakistan Ltd. (Ex-Vice-President Peshawar  
Chamber of Commerce)**

Mr. Atif Shehzad, a renowned Serial Entrepreneur and Philanthropist, is currently working as Chief Executive, Makka Agency, Uniliver Pakistan Ltd. Mr. Shehzad has been Vice President Peshawar Chamber of small Traders and Small Industry KPK (2017-2018). He is an active and vibrant corporate member of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Peshawar. He is an active industrialist promoting the linkage between industry and academia which includes: member of the Board of Studies Dept of Management Sciences Islamia College Peshawar, Member Pakistan Chemist and Druggist Association, Member BoD Alternate Solution Institute (ASI), member of Advisory Board for Experts in Management and Social Sciences, and member of the BoG of Experts Centre for Market and Policy Research. Mr. Shehzad is the founder of Entrepreneurial Development Club at Islamia College Peshawar. The club tasked with incubating business plans and ideas. Mr. Shehzad has also generously provided financial support to the needy students in the club. He established several businesses in his 22 year of business journey, i.e., CNG, Pharmaceutical distribution, FMCG distribution, imports, real estates, etc.



#### **Key Points of his Address and Policy Recommendations**

Mr. Shahzad focussed on the issues that entrepreneurs have been facing. The most common issues that he emphasized are:

- We are weak in the documentation. That is hindering diagnosis.
- Data is a big issue
- Lack of integration
- Universities are not producing competitive products
- We lack economic agenda and solid economic policies

To tackle these issues, he suggested a few areas that we need to work on. These are: the provision of an enabling environment; the right ecosystem and freedom to create wealth; need to protect property rights; Solid roadmap; need peace and consistent policies; and meaningful research.

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER IV

**Title: Alternative to the IMF**

**Prof. Dr. Shahida Wizarat,  
Dean College of Economics and Social Development  
(CESD), Institute of Business Management (IOBM),  
Karachi, Pakistan**



Professor Dr. Shahida Wizarat did her Masters from Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, USA on a Graduate Fellowship by the Rotary Foundation of the Rotary International. She did her Ph D in Economics from the University of East Anglia on a British Council scholarship. Dr. Wizarat's areas of interest are industrial productivity; profitability; concentration; economic policies; international financial institutions; debt management; privatization and liberalization; food security; political economy; natural resources, conflict and growth. She has authored three books, The Rise and Fall of Industrial Productivity in Pakistan (OUP), Fighting Dependence: Proclaiming Sovereignty for an Enslaved Pakistan (LAP) and Fighting Imperialism: Liberating Pakistan (CRS). She has authored more than 80 research papers published in international and national journals and newspapers. Dr. Wizarat has been visiting faculty at the Naval Staff College formerly at Karachi, Air War College Karachi, Command and Staff College and Southern Command Quetta and National Defense University, Islamabad. She has served as editor of the Pakistan Journal of Applied Economics and Professor, Director of the Applied Economics Research Centre (AERC), Chief Editor Pakistan Business Review and Director Research IOBM. She has also served on the Board of Directors of the Karachi Stock Exchange. She is member editorial board, Journal of the Institute of Far East - Russian Academy of Sciences. Currently she is Dean College of Economics and Social Development (CESD) at the Institute of Business Management (IOBM). She is member and President Rotary Club Karachi East 2020-21. She is a member of the Technical Oversight Committee of the Population Council.

### Key Points of her Address and Policy Recommendations

She talked about how the relationship between the IMF program and poor nations is harmful and injurious. She expressed that the IMF insistence on devaluation of the currency makes the cost of production expensive as raw materials and machinery and POL are mostly imported. Lending rate adds to the problem. She was of the firm belief that the debt crisis is the mother of all crises. She concluded her talk on the following alternative strategy:

- Ban import of luxury goods
- Import of essential items like gas, wheat, etc. be in local currency
- Charge market rates on the use of assets like roads
- Explore substitutes for imports
- Explore alternate markets for exports
- Repatriation of Pakistani looted money

We need to have a policy to ban GMOs and put phytosanitary standards in place.

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER V

**Title: Human Resource Management: Prepare for the Uncertain Future of Change**

**Dr. Mohamed Ayyub Hassan,  
Senior Lecturer, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM),**

Mohamed Ayyub was born in Johor (Malaysia) in 1983. He received his MSc. (Human Resource Development) and Ph.D. in Management from the Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, in 2013 and 2016, respectively. In December 2016, he became a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Human Resource Development, Faculty of Management, UTM, and at this point, he holds the same position at the School of Human Resource Development and Psychology (SHARPS), Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities (FSSH), UTM. He also has vast working experience with private industry and Government Linked Corporation (GLC) before being appointed as a Senior lecturer. He is the author or co-author of more than 40 academic papers/articles in national and international refereed journals and more than 10 conference contributions. His research interests cover several aspects across Organizational Behaviour and Human Resource Management, mainly Human Resource Development and Career Development. He is also actively involved in consultation and research projects with community Engagement.



### Key Points of her Address and Policy Recommendations

Dr. Ayub talked in detail on Human Resource Management and preparation for the uncertain future of change. He elaborated on the need of AI and IOT and its linkage with economic prosperity. He also talked about traditional HR and as to what directly contributes to the profitability of the firm. He said that this approach dramatically increases HR efficiency; adopt new ways of managing HR; challenges in HR 4.0; Need to upskill employees, training of employees; flexible HR and remote working pose different challenges; and attracting and retaining the best challenges.

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER VI

**Title: Prosperity through Economic Freedom and Research**

**Mr. Max Matusow,  
Training Associate, Atlas Network, USA**

Max is the training associate at Atlas Network. He manages the project mentorship program, MarCom certification, and the “Around the Network” webinar series. Max graduated from American University with a BA in International Studies with concentrations in international development and global comparative governance. Prior to joining Atlas, Max worked with the Center for International Private Enterprise on the Western Balkans and Central and Eastern Europe teams.



### **Key Points of his Address and Policy Recommendations**

While talking on the role of Atlas Network USA in promoting individual liberty and rule of law through local think tanks, he emphasized on the need of collaboration among the think tanks around the world for sharing ideas because these networks are conglomerations of great minds. In this regard Atlas Network USA works with small think tanks to build their relative capacity for coping with problems.

### Vote of Thanks

The Organizing Committee expresses its deepest gratitude to those who helped the Committee to plan and organize this event. The Committee believes that the event must have inspired many individuals in academia to undertake new research initiatives and participate in such events in future.

Organizing and conducting such panel discussions is, no doubt, an arduous task. It requires a lot of inputs and efforts to make such event a success. In its true essence, the event signifies the unflinching efforts on the part of the keynote speakers and scholars in the field of interest. The Committee recognizes and values contribution of everyone.

The Committee looks forward to the potential experts to participate in such events of national interest and hopes that such gathering and discussions during and after such events are of value for all the stakeholders. It is also expected that each keynote and policy recommendations in response to the individual question would add to the knowledge of audience.

The Committee is deeply indebted to all **Panelists** for agreeing to participate in the event and sharing their thoughts and ideas with the participants. Besides, the Committee also expresses its gratitude to all the dignitaries.

At the end, the Committee once again greatly appreciates all those who directly and indirectly contributed in the organization of this event. **THANK YOU ALL!**

*Organizing Committee*  
CEMS-08-2023