

# ANNUAL TRAINERS RETREAT



**International Conference**  
**Indigenous Culture &**  
**Models Of Development**



**MELBOURNE** | April 23, 2018

## 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Trainer Retreat (ATR) and International Conference 2018

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The 20<sup>th</sup> International ATR Conference was organized in Melbourne & Sydney, Australia from April 21<sup>st</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The purpose of this year's conference was to deliberate on Indigenous Culture and Models of Development, promote rich culture of Pakistan in Australia and ensure an exchange of knowledge and ideas.

24 participants from Organizational, Professional and General Membership categories were part of the innovative and successful conference.

The conference was moderated by a renowned communication specialist and organizational member of HRDN Mr. Tauseeq Haider, Managing Director of Black Box Sounds. Guest Speakers of the conference included:

1. Dr. Syed Kaleem Imam, Inspector General Motorway Police and National High Way Authority Pakistan
2. Mr. Nadeem Malik, Senior Professor, Melbourne University, Australia
3. Ms. Humaira Farooq, Managing Director- NICS, Pakistan
4. Ms. Sameen Iqbal, Chief Executive Officer, We are One (WAO) Pakistani Radio Channel- Melbourne Australia

### **WELCOME NOTE – Chairman HRD NETWORK**

Mr. Roomi Saeed Hayat, Chairman HRDN, welcomed all participants to the 20<sup>th</sup> ATR at Melbourne, Australia by mentioning that the ATR was a flagship event of HRD Network's for the last 19 years and lauded the organizations effort by continuing to provide a great learning and sharing platform for its members and organizing such international events on a regular basis. Furthermore, he stated that exposure to different countries and in different cultures helps development practitioners work with people from diverse backgrounds and learn new skills; hence, exchange opportunities like the ATR helps improve people-to-people contact between various sectors and cultures as well as promotes tolerance and pluralism in addition to learning and best practices.



While highlighting the current year's ATR theme of Indigenous Culture and Models of Development, Mr. Hayat asked everyone to acknowledge and appreciate the rich and beautiful culture of each country and promote and present the positive image of Pakistan to the hosts in Australia. He introduced the member's well-designed thematic documentaries and also formally opened up the productive discussion forum on each participant's presentation.

### **CONFERENCE OPENING – Syed Tauseeq Haider**

Syed Tauseeq Haider, Managing Director Black Box Sounds and Organizational Member of HRDN, formally opened the 20<sup>th</sup> International ATR Conference and stated that everyone looked forward to share positive insights on the rich and



diversified culture of Pakistan with honorable guests from Australia. The aim was also to project the policies of Pakistan that were contributing positively in promoting peace and tolerance in the region.

He reiterated that a beautiful documentary has been produced on the culture and values of Pakistan. This documentary depicts the vibrant cultures and diversity of the Pakistani society in promoting the colors of love, peace, harmony and tolerance.

After the documentary was presented, the guest speakers had an insightful exchange of ideas and culture and discussed the theme through interactive sessions with all participants.

### ***Interfaith Harmony by Dr. Syed Kaleem Imam- IG National Highway and Motorway Police***

A productive session on “Interfaith Harmony” was delivered by Dr. Syed Kaleem Imam. “Odero Lal”, a documentary produced by Black Box sounds was also played during the session. Dr. Kaleem further shed light on Pakistan’s diversity and respect for different religions and cultures. The documentary’s message was that all religions promote tolerance and peace.



Explaining the interfaith harmony, the speaker touched upon the teachings of Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (s.a.w.w) followed those principles in his life.

The Prophet initiated his mission in 610 A.D. with his ideology based on monotheism in the times when Arabs believed in polytheism. So naturally his mission became subject to bilateral negotiations. Allah says in the verse 125 of Sura Noah that:

*“Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowing of who is [rightly] guided”.*

While quoting the verses from the Holy Quran he mentioned that Islam advocates an atmosphere of peace, tolerance, and harmony forms the basis of any society.

Dr. Imam gave brief Analysis of the Constitution of Pakistan on Minorities and Interfaith Harmony. He mentioned that Pakistan is the sixth most populous country of the world; nearly 95% of its population is Muslim. Amongst minorities people belong to various religions: namely, Christians, Hindus, Parsis, Zoroastrians, Bahais, Sikhs, Buddhists, and small portions of Kalasha, Kihals, and Jains. The number of minorities is low but the number does not make it any less significant. It is in this realm that the flag of the country is designed in such a way that the white part represents the minorities. The 1973 Constitution of Pakistan declares the country as an Islamic Republic, and Islam as the state religion protects rights of all citizens without any discrimination of faith and religion. These minorities have been an important part of country’s development process nearly in all spheres of life.

The speaker also explained the challenges faced by the Pakistani society. While the Constitution of Pakistan provides full protection and equal rights to all citizens, without any discrimination of color, creed, language or gender to freely profess and practice their religions and culture respectively, religious minorities and others still face discrimination and victimization by some dissident elements. This has adversely impacted the national development and international image of the country. The country has been fighting against terrorism with both internal and external actors, since decades.

The speaker shared some moving examples of Pakistan's diverse cultural heritage depicting interfaith harmony:

- Mithi, a town of Hindu Majority
- Dera Sahib Gurdwara (Lahore)
- St. Patrick's Cathedral Church
- Katas Raj Temple
- The Hinglaj Mata Mandir
- Nankana Sahib
- Shared Holy Shrines
- Eating together at the time of Iftar

The session concluded on a need to develop a multi-pronged advocacy strategy to counter all aspects of violence, discrimination and extremism.

### ***Concluding Remarks***

Mr. Malik Fateh Khan, Chief Executive Officer GBTI and professional Member of HRD Network, presented a vote of thanks to all conference participants from Australia and Pakistan. He appreciated the efforts of HRDN for holding its 20<sup>th</sup> ATR in Melbourne on a relevant theme needed to promote a better image of Pakistan.

### ***Refreshing Moments***

The rationale behind international ATR conference is to promote opportunities for sharing and creating platforms to engage various societies to promote interaction and explore channels of communications with different parts of the world. Conference's agenda also allowed the participants to explore Sydney and Melbourne and experience a diverse society of Australia through firsthand experience.



## *Picture Gallery*









