



# Pursuit of Political Peace

## “Politics - An Important tool in the World Peace process”

Virtual Meet | 20 November 2021

Phuro Innovations hosted its first virtual discussion on Pursuit of Political Peace. Debuted on November 20, 2021 as a series of year-long engagements/ innovative solutions and research-oriented approach, the virtual meet brought together the thought processes of leaders from India, Bhutan, Nepal, and Balochistan; on the subject of “Politics - An Important tool in the World Peace process”.

The discussions were very fruitful and following solutions/ innovative ideas were presented by the stalwart leaders. There was a breakthrough of thoughts and out-of-box thinking, which is the real need of the hour.



### Rachna Sharma | India

*Founder of Phuro Innovations, Co-Chair of HAE India, and Alumnus of Harvard Business School*

With the demographic dividend, SAARC can be the next powerhouse by adding a structured framework/ institution which will advise the region on conflict resolution and peace treaties in the future. So Phuro Innovations wants to be that institution, structured framework and the torchbearer of advocacy bringing together the organizations, leaders, and shared philosophies that could help the region in maintaining peace. No other superpower can help us. E.g. the United Nations was established to stop world wars, however, if that is correct then there wouldn't have been wars that continue till today such as in Syria, Afghanistan & Lebanon to name a few. They are most concerned with Europe and America and have ignored the emerging nations' conflicts for a long period of time now. As a founder of Phuro Innovations, Ms. Rachna Sharma mentioned that ‘when I talk about Peace, I specifically talk about positive peace, which is attitudes, institutions, and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies’.



### Chhaya Sharma Pant | Nepal

*Former Member of Parliament of Nepal, President of ABWCI, Member of the Advisory Committee of SAARC Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs Council, and awardee of the Ambassador of Peace by Universal Peace Federation*

Ms. Sharma began on a note that despite of the existence of a special relationship between Nepal and India, the two sides have not been able to appreciate the historic bond. She underscored that the root cause of the friction between two nations is the sensitivity of the borders shared by Nepal with China, which creates susceptibility in India. In her views, bilateral negotiations is the way to solve the issues, coupled with strengthening the people-to-people and business-to-business relations given the commonality in language and culture of the two countries.

In regard to SAARC, she mentioned that people of the member states are not aware of the political, social, and economic dynamics of each other, which needs to be addressed to enhance peace



within the region. Upon being asked about the role of women in peacebuilding, Ms. Sharma mentioned that women are born with the attributes for peace, and gifts of perseverance, commitment, empathy, and mindfulness. Quoting the research that participation of women in peace process can lead upto 24% decrease in violence, she emphasised the need for increased women participation in decision making roles for greater good.

Highlighting that ballet is more powerful than bullet, Ms. Sharma opined that we'll never make everyone happy but we should first try and make everyone peaceful because only then we can discuss if there is happiness or not. She further said that wasting a lot of time fighting only brings destruction, hurt, and pain to the nations; and we should take up dialogue and negotiation as a tool to increase the efficacy of the peace process. She asserted that and finally it is only with peaceful argument that any war or conflicts can be ended and SAARC nations do not always need to depend upon outside interventions, rather peace talks should be initiated internally for faster resolutions.

Shedding light on her learnings during her training "Conflict Transformation across Cultures" at SIT, Vermont, she said that we all understand the meaning of mediation and conflict resolution, but do not understand the process. In light of the same, she recommended that governments should form special committees for conflict resolution and take them to the places which have gone through similar turmoil in their regions and have been to pull out their countries out of conflict.

Mentioning that it's high time for both the sides to review the 1950 Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship, she underlined that it was the recognition of cooperation and will of friendly nations that led to the formation of SAARC. Ms. Sharma further opined that SAARC nations must focus on free trade zone, collective economic security and reducing their dependency on non-regional powers. Appreciating the strengthened relations between Bangladesh and India, she emphasised on the need for India and Nepal to open border for travel and work without visas, and show greater cooperation in the education sector.

She concluded by saying that we all get to know the thoughts of business leaders or political leaders or activists and other societal and spiritual leaders; but we as leaders should also know what people want and what do they think. Peace is our innate capacity and it is time for the world leaders to take action and learn to listen to the voice of the people, fulfil your commitments, and implement your policies. Do not play with sentiment of people, do not divide them and rule for your own personal gains.

## Kinga Tshering | Bhutan



*Founder of the Institute of Happiness Bhutan, Former Member of Parliament of Bhutan, and an alumnus of Harvard Kennedy and Divinity schools*

Starting with brief history of the foundation of democracy in Bhutan, Mr. Tshering comprehensively described the constitutional equation of Gross National Happiness (GNH), GNH being the ultimate goal of Bhutan as a nation. Compiled by his Institute of Happiness (IOH) based in Bhutan, he described that the constitutional equation has three parameters, namely X, Y, and Z, where x and y are the two inputs (donating Environmental space & Stages of Life respectively) which go into achieving the end goal of peace & happiness (compassion, joy, and kindness as mentioned in Buddhism) leading to infinite space as z axis. He further explained the relevance of the three axis in relation to the articles mentioned in the constitution of Bhutan. He also mentioned that the constitutional equation is an attempt made by IOH to reduce the complexity of the long constitution, compiled and depicted the



simplest manner, with infinite and boundless measurement of peace and happiness as the end goal common to any society or nation or region or world at large.

In response to the query in regard to value of educational exchange across SAARC countries, Mr. Tshering emphasised that peace across the borders will result in saving the military expenditure for all the nations which can be capitalized on human development in areas such as education, healthcare etc. Further he underscored the need of the regional countries to come together and grow as a global power.

Mr. Tshering pointed out that the conflicts in SAARC region can be reduced by first acknowledging its complexity and thereafter taking steps to reduce the complexity. He underlined the importance of transparency amongst the member states and a need to break individual powershare for the common greater good of the region.

Referring to the Tip of the Iceberg model, Mr. Tshering in his concluding remarks said that Mr. Tshering said that we as humans, societies, or nations for 90% of the iceberg which is underneath the surface. In his views, we need to acknowledge this as a universal human fact which will enable us to consciously bridge the differences in our belief systems across religions, geographies and nationalities. He congratulated Phuro Innovations for pioneering the act of bringing together the leaders from SAARC nations and concluded that peace is possible by reducing the complex issues to simple issues which will enable the leaders to choose the agendas in an easy manner and resolve the conflicts in an efficient manner.



## **Jamal Nasir Baloch | Balochistan**

*Politician & Thought Leader, Head of the Foreign Affairs Department for the Free Balochistan Movement party, Masters in constitutional law and a degree in politics and government from the University of London*

Mr. Nasir started by describing the major problem of Balochistan in his view being its occupation by force and the major roadblock in conflict resolution being non-recognition of Balochistan as equal by Pakistan.

Upon being inquired about the role of the United Nations in conflict resolution in regard to Balochistan, he argued that post the formation of the United Nations, within six months Balochistan was occupied which makes one of the first cases of occupation of a foreign land. In his view, the United Nations has been reduced to a talking plot of powerful nations which incapacitates it from resolving major conflicts in the world.

Shedding light on the dynamics of post-independence of India, he mentioned that when Bengalis aspired to form an independent nation, India came to its help whereas Balochistan was not paid heed while it asked for help from India and Afghanistan despite of the historic relations. He further underscored that colonization of Balochistan is worse than the colonization of India, given the fact that freedom fighter in India were able to live within India but people believing in the idea of freedom for Balochistan have to live in exile owing to the genocide carried out by Pakistani military, limiting them from participating in the political process.

Raising question on the political process in Balochistan, Mr. Nasir quoted that election process in the region is not just. In his views the handful leaders who want to stay with Pakistan are empowered, given an instance where the present Chief Minister of Balochistan got less than 600 votes which was in his term also reported by media. He opinionated that the world does not even know what actually the Baloch people want owing to a corrupt electoral process. He further



stressed upon the need for Baloch people to be heard and their opinion being recognized with equality.

Continuing the conversation, he expressed his opinion that Pakistan instead of fixing its own territory, always has an outside interest outside causing disharmony in the whole SAARC region. Mr. Nasir further referred to the foundation of Pakistan based upon Two Nation Theory which in simple terms can be called Political Islam, regardless of any ethnicity or race but only a religion. In his view, this is the reason that there is a clash of identities between Balochistan and Pakistan in the historical and communal context. He underlined that in SAARC nations people want to rule people, which needs to be stopped and open dialogues have to be initiated.

Mr. Nasir concluded by saying that the stakeholders of the region and the researchers around the world are trying to find solutions to the conflicts in Balochistan in particular and SAARC at large by adopting the western methodologies, whereas SAARC as a region is unique in sense of its conflicts. The stakeholders of SAARC need to frame an indigenous approach for conflict resolution, starting right from a conviction for peace as the first step.



### **Anshu Khanna | India**

Columnist and Author, Craft Revivalist, and Communications Expert

Ms. Anshu Khanna co-hosted the meeting by engaging the panelists in thought provoking discussions and but added several relevant suggestions to the panel. Ms. Khanna has won several accolades for her work one of them being the Nari Shakti award to revive the art, culture, and heritage of princely India. She has been able to find a perfect cord between the Royalties of India to a common man on the ground, connecting them via public events, which was not a thing in the past.