



NATIONAL  
YOUTH  
SUMMIT  
2014

The logo features the word "NATIONAL" in a dark blue, sans-serif font at the top. Below it, "YOUTH" is written in large, bold, pink letters with a white outline and a slight 3D effect. Underneath "YOUTH", the word "SUMMIT" is written in a dark blue, cursive script font. At the bottom, the year "2014" is written in a dark blue, sans-serif font. The entire text is surrounded by a spray of light blue dots and paint splatters. The background consists of a white lower half and a blue upper half, separated by a dark blue wavy line that curves across the middle. There are also light blue wavy lines at the top and bottom edges.

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**“There is a dire need to unite the people under one umbrella in Pakistan, and thus there should be one platform for sports, arts and entertainment for every Pakistani. There should be social, cultural and educational programmes across the country, which can help remove the gap between ethnicities, cultures, clans and tribes and which should also be able to define our moral and ethical values. The current challenges of Pakistan demand that there should be a debate on national issues on every aspect of our society including poverty, extremism, women and diversity”**

*Resolution of the National Youth Summit 2014*

## About The Organizers

### Aiming Change for Tomorrow (ACT) International



**ACT International** is a not-for-profit rights based organization focusing on women, youth and children. The organization particularly works to involve and empower communities by building peoples' engagement, capacity and partnerships for a better tomorrow. The organization aims to develop partnerships and innovative programmes with the support of development actors to contribute in the efforts of "Aiming Change for Tomorrow". The mission of ACT International is "Empowering communities to recover, progress and advance by building people's engagement, capacity and partnership focusing on women and children for a better tomorrow".

### Commoner



**Commoner** is a monthly socio-political magazine focusing on a number of issues ranging from poverty to development, environment, women issues and cultural, ethnic and sectarian dynamics. The publication brings out special reports, research stories, interviews and focused articles for a wide breadth of readers ranging from students, diplomats, policy makers and businessmen. The publication also holds sections for women focusing on lifestyle, social issues and entertainment. Similarly, the youth is also one of the reader-segment of the magazine, and thus exclusive research stories, contemporary issues and other interesting aspects are covered to enhance the segment's interest.



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## Words of the Director

While it has been a wonderful experience to work for the cause of youth, I feel obliged and happy on the successful completion of the National Youth Summit 2014. I had been engaged with the programme from its inception stage, and after conducting our first summit in Muzaffarabad, it had been great enthusiasm in the entire team to take this programme forward. Thus, the 2014's summit was planned in August of 2014 in Islamabad.

However, with the rising political temperature in Islamabad, the Summit had to be postponed, and in no way was it happy ending for any of the team members of ACT International. The team had been engaged in a number of endeavors, whereby it was initiating new programmes, beginning newer endeavors, conducting activities which included launching of advocacy forums in various cities across the country. However, everyone at ACT had the Summit in their minds, and thus it was re-scheduled in December.

As a result, the Summit was conducted from 11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> December 2014, whereby youth from all regions was sensitized, trained, equipped and sent to the field for completing their social action projects. The summit had several sessions on diversified subjects including women empowerment, role of youth, right to education, cultural integration, development approaches, and consisted of an evening of concert of regional musicians.

What could be observed was enthusiasm all around, where the participants engaged in healthy discussion on various topics. They had questions to ask, experiences to share and guidance to seek – and the summit provided an excellent opportunity to everyone to achieve it.

I feel happy that the summit has concluded successfully, and while we've all moved forward with our endeavors, our youth is more aware, involved in social action, engaged in activities and ready to deliver within their own capacities. While this report is detailing a few selected projects, I hope that we will soon share the report of completed social action projects with our readers.

Ending the word, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our partners and sponsors for the event; Higher Education Commission, Aurat Foundation and Azad Jammu Kashmir Rural Support Programme in particular for joining hands with us for this cause. I would also like to thank the facilitators and volunteers who passionately worked for the success of this event.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Waqas Banoori', is positioned above the printed name.

Waqas Banoori



## Executive Summary

National Youth Summit 2014 was inaugurated in Islamabad taking place from 11th to 14th December 2014. The 2014 summit is the 2nd youth summit in row as part of ACT International's mission to involve youth, build their capacity and provide them an opportunity to understand local, regional, national and global issues and their complexities. Commoner partnered in the event for the cause of young people under its Corporate Social Responsibility to promote the role of arts, peace and culture in the advancement of society.

The inaugural session was addressed by Mr. Farman Ullah, DG programmes HEC, who was also the chief guest, Mr. Akhlaq Rasool CEO AJK Rural Support Programme, Prof. Farkhanda Aurangzeb from Aurat Foundation and Ch. Israr-ul-Haque, Chairperson ACT International.

The Summit was inaugurated by playing the national anthem of Pakistan. The youth shared their ideas and motivation for working towards cultural integration, interfaith harmony and development of the country. The discussion included aspects of leadership and development, social action, activism and drafting the resolution. The four day summit had sessions on development, role of youth in progress, women empowerment, role of media and a stage play. It also had a cultural evening with musicians from all regions of Pakistan, as well as a walk for peace.

The second day had various sessions on role of youth in development process, how youth can contribute to the society, women empowerment and role of media. The day began with the session of Ms. Salma Butt, Advisor to Government of Punjab who termed the youth engine of society as they have to start off. She urged the youth to take action and look forward, and said that they cannot achieve anything without bringing up ideas which are realistic.

The second session, women empowerment: Is it achievable in Pakistan, discussed the overall actions done for the empowerment of women. The chief guest for the session was Mr. Lars Nordrum, Deputy Head of Mission of Norwegian Royal Embassy while the panelists included Professor Farkhanda from Aurat Foundation, Ms. Shahida Kazmi from World Food Programme and OD expert Mrs. Rifat Shams from Human Resource Learning Centre. Speaking on the occasion, Lars Nordrum compared the overall situation of women in Norway and Pakistan, and stated that women are serving as generals, parliamentarians and chief secretaries in his country and hoped that a similar number of women reach to these ladders in Pakistan. Professor Farkhanda shared her own experiences and said that the word empowerment is not generalized but a contextual word. She said that the economic and political empowerment is very important and contributes to social empowerment. Ms. Shahida Kazmi gave a presentation and discussed various issues and challenges while dealing with empowerment issues. She stated it's tough to achieve but collectively with our efforts we can bring a change. She urged the youth to start with their home to see a difference because a real person thinks in a very different way. Similarly, Mrs. Rifat Shams shared her life story and conducted an activity where the participants drew an image of a woman farmer. She described the difficulty in making an image



of a woman peasant who is in majority in the rural parts of the country. Later on, a session was conducted on how youth can contribute to the society, which was taken by Mr. Naeem Mirza, Chief Operating Officer, Aurat Foundation. He asked the youth to bridge differences, create opportunities and work for harmony among themselves, which will help in the development and advancement of the country.

One of the sessions, changing trends in context of evolution of media was taken by prominent journalist Urooj Raza. She informed the participants of National Youth Summit that the media is only there to cover the story as it develops, and it is dependent on many factors. She urged them to make their own opinions after listening to all types of views and versions. Lastly, the participants of the summit discussed the social action projects for the summit, and outlined draft resolution for the National Youth Summit 2014.

The third day of the Summit brought a Walk for Peace, where the youth urged all ethnicities, communities and tribes in the country to promote peace in the society. Later, Mr. Saeed Ul Hassan, Education Advisor at Oxfam GB took the session on Role of Youth in the Changing Context for the participants of the summit. He said that he has been seeing frustration and depression in the eyes of young people around him, and he feels disturbed to see this. He said that the youth should not leave hope, and said that the things change with passage of time. He asked youth to be patient and work selflessly for what they belief, and promote culture of acceptance amongst each other.

It also included a cultural and musical evening where musicians from different regions performed in various local languages, including Pashto, Punjabi, Seraiki, Sindhi and Kashmiri languages, while a local dance of Balochistan, called Attan, was also featured in the evening. During the cultural and musical evening, Mr. Nori Ashida, First Secretary, Embassy of Japan was the guest of honor who said that he really enjoys the culture and heritage of Pakistan. He also performed at the Summit and song two songs in Urdu language, which was greatly appreciated by the youth and the guests. A visiting delegation of Asian African Rural Development Organization (AARDO) also arrived at the summit, bringing in delegates of various Asian and African countries to the National Youth Summit 2014.

The 2014 Summit concluded in Islamabad, wherein the youth from all over Pakistan demanded unity and debate on national issues in a serious manner. During the summit, a number of speakers shared their opinions and perspectives with the youth delegates who urged them to take action and look forward, and said that they cannot achieve anything without bringing up ideas which are realistic. The speakers asked the youth to bridge differences, create opportunities and work for harmony among themselves, which will help in the development and advancement of the country.



### Summit Theme

Arts, Peace & Culture: the lighter side of Pakistan

### National Youth Summit 2014

National Youth Summit 2014 is the 2<sup>nd</sup> youth summit in row as part of ACT International's mission to involve youth, build their capacity and provide them an opportunity to understand local, regional, national and global issues and their complexities under its Youth Development programme. The summit took place from 11 to 14 December 2014 in Islamabad. The four day summit was composed on the structure of the 1<sup>st</sup> NYS, which took place in Muzaffarabad from 11 to 14 February 2013.

### Venue

Situated in the centre of Islamabad, Aiwan-e-Quaid has a spacious auditorium along with several halls and conference rooms. The facility offers a space to young people to think about the ideology of Pakistan, and a glimpse in the life of its founder, Quaid-e-Azam. Located in the heart of the city, the splendor of this unique work of contemporary design and modern facilities truly compliments the magnificence of the ever-enchanting Margalla hills.

The high-tech, fully equipped rooms and the central hall hosted the National Youth Summit 2014 and provided a perfect meeting venue for the successful outcome of the event. The venue could also be easily accessed by public transport.

### Impact

It did not only provide an opportunity to display a positive image of various communities and regions within the boundary of Pakistan, but it also provided an opportunity to the young people to experience living in an environment which is their own, yet unrecognized. It was an opportunity to the young people nationally to show their skills, share best practices, enhance cooperation and advance intercultural and interfaith harmony. Furthermore, social action projects would make up a possible scenario where the young people can mobilize communities, stand for their rights, work jointly on common interests and form partnerships to tackle the challenges of tomorrow.





### Day 1: Registration & Inauguration – 11<sup>th</sup> December 2014

As per the arrangement, the registration of the participants and guests for the National Youth Summit 2014 began. A total of 249 participants registered for the summit. After the initial action which involved ice breaker sessions with the facilitators, the ceremony began with an informal session consisting of team interaction with the participants.

However, the formal inauguration of the summit was conducted by Mr. Farman Ullah, Director General, Higher Education Commission. A number of speakers from civil society, academia and media also spoke on the occasion.

The opening ceremony started with the recitation of holy Quran, which was followed by a welcome address from Ch. Israr ul Haque, Chairperson ACT International.



Mr. Farman Ullah Jan, DG Programmes HEC addressing at the inauguration of National Youth Summit 2014

He welcomed the guests and the participants of the Summit, and shared that it is the second youth summit in row with a focus on culture, to bridge gaps, develop skills, strengthen

leadership skills, motivate young people to excel and take steps which can help them become a better citizen. He shared that ACT International was formed in 2012, and within no time, the management realized that the most important change agent is the youth, and thus, the organization has begun specific programmes for youth, one of which is National Youth Summit.

Mr. Farman Ullah Jan shared that HEC is trying hard for development and streamlining the youth within the education system of Pakistan. He said that he feels happy that ACT International and HEC have joined hands for the 2014 Summit. He said that Pakistan is a strategic country and it needs national integration. He added that for this we have to accept each other and share the responsibilities. He said that the country is facing many challenges and that the responsibility and



A participant registering herself at the National Youth Summit 2014

burden is shifting to youth and they must be able to take it on their shoulders. He also said that there are opportunities and threats, and the youth has to be fully aware of it and need to excel in all fields of life.

He termed youth as the future of the country, and stated that the guests at the summit are sensitizing and assisting the youth. He added that HEC alone cannot shoulder this responsibility and it needs other hands to engage youth, and thus this summit is a great such opportunity. He urged the youth to fully involve and engage in positive activities. He welcomed the guests from around the country and thanked the partners of the National Youth Summit 2014 for standing for a greater cause.

Thereafter, the Director National Youth Summit 2014 Mr. Waqas Banoori shared the overall mission and idea of the Summit, the need for engagement of youth and how it is designed to contribute to the cultural and social integration of different communities. He informed that the summit is an endeavor to enhance leadership capacity, build confidence, introduce the youth to the social challenges, inculcate responsibility, ensure intercultural & interfaith harmony and provide an opportunity to network with the youth around the country.

He added that the summit serves as an intellectual platform, bringing together the youth from different areas of Pakistan, creating an inductive space for dialogue and promoting constructive actions to ensure beneficial future of youth. He also said that the event also brings out area specific social action projects led by regional youth groups.

At the end of the opening session, the national anthem of Pakistan was sung by the participants and guests of the National Youth Summit 2014 to formally inaugurate the Summit.

It followed specific discussion of youth and the facilitators on outlining the social action projects. The facilitators gave them brief information about the idea of such projects, their management and execution, handling issues, completion and penning and submitting the final completion report to ACT International. They also responded to a number of queries from young people which ranged from dealing with government to finding grants from philanthropists and civil society organizations, as well as final report.



A group of participants involved in an ice-breaker exercise at the summit



## Day 2: Sessions – 12<sup>th</sup> December 2014

The second day had various sessions on role of youth in development process, how youth can contribute to the society, women empowerment and role of media. The youth from around the country was sensitized and informed about various issues, challenges and their role. A couple of interactive sessions helped clear various questions in the minds of these young souls.

### *Session: Role of Youth at par with Development*

The session was addressed by Ms. Salma Butt, Advisor to the Government of Punjab who conducted an interactive dialogue from the very beginning. She termed education, health and employment as the main issues of youth and that they have a direct relation with development. She shared that the government of Pakistan defines youth in the age bracket between 15 from 29; however she said that the age bracket of youth cannot be specified in the Pakistani context as per her own experience of working with different communities and ethnicities in different regions.

She shared that the successive governments in Pakistan have had their focus always remained on the infrastructure development and not on the human development which also includes youth. She shared that it has recently become a focus of our governments and it is very important due to a high number of young people in the country. She said that the youth has to be engaged in participatory development for dividends in the future.

While explaining the process of development and the role of youth, she said that since this group is in transition of getting into adulthood, so they have the ability of bringing in contributions to economic, social and political life of the country. She termed the youth engine of society as they have to start off. She urged the youth to take action and look forward, and said that they cannot achieve anything without bringing up ideas which are realistic. She also said that we need to invest in entrepreneurship, skills and employability. She said that the government, civil society and the corporate sector needs to engage youth with commitment; however she urged that the young people also have to show a similar commitment.

She said that our youth is abundantly capable but their energies are not focused in the right direction. While quoting several minor



Ms Salma Butt, Advisor to the Government of Punjab addressing the participants of the National Youth Summit 2014

examples, she said that our youth wants to be a fictional character. However, she said that we need to get into real life and put out efforts for development with a focused approach. She added that our youth has aspirations, however they are not ready to take steps and they are focused on a supply approach rather than the initiative approach. She said that the youth needs to come up with practical ideas which are realistic and approachable. She also said that the youth need to create their own identity and representation. She shared the history of Pakistani youth who are the trend-setters today, from artists to development professionals, politicians, and urged them to bring out their own leader within themselves and stand for the tomorrow of the country.

“We need to bring in youth groups and youth clubs who can engage in constructive and productive things in society. These are smaller activities which can be conducted at societal level in neighborhoods and communities which can be utilized for smaller endeavors like working on character building, social action, attitude building, etc.” she added. Concluding the session, she told the participants of the summit that Information, Access and knowledge are the most important things for youth, and they must put efforts to attain them.

#### ***Session: Women Empowerment: Is it achievable in Pakistan?***

The second session, women empowerment: Is it achievable in Pakistan, discussed the overall actions, efforts and activities for the empowerment of women in a historical context, and whether it has resulted in some success or not. The chief guest for the session was Mr. Lars Nordrum, Deputy Head of Mission of Norwegian Royal Embassy while the panelists included Professor Farkhanda Aurangzeb from Aurat Foundation, Ms. Shahida Kazmi from World Food Programme and women issues expert Mrs. Rifat Shams from Human Resource Learning Centre.

Beginning the session, Prof. Farkhanda Aurangzeb said that empowerment is a strong word however we do not think what can be the result of it. She said that it is a contextual term and cannot be applied on all given situations. She shared one of her experience as a researcher when she found that a rural woman cannot even read a name of a medicine written in plain Urdu. She said that in that case, she had offered a medicine for goat to her ill child which further deteriorated his condition. She said that the need of this woman was different for empowerment from a woman living in an urban setting.

She briefed that woman empowerment doesn't mean that she should be a warrior, but it means that she should be aware of happenings in her surroundings, community, city, country or internationally. She said that the women



Professor Farkhanda Aurangzeb sharing her views on the empowerment of women in Pakistan

empowerment is if a woman knows what role she can play in response to those happenings.

She shared that there are several avenues for empowerment; however there are ideologies that are important. “One is to express the opinion as you can always create your space through it. For this they need education and knowledge. Second is representation. The third is resource, as whosoever holds the resource has the ability to bring change.”

She urged the youth to make their women educationally strong, give them opportunities of economic empowerment and bring them into politically empowered fields so that they have a say in the affairs of the state when the time comes.

Moving on, Ms. Rifat Shams asked the participants to draw an image of a happy farmer as per their imaginations in her session. She also took the opportunity to highlight and challenge a perspective, and to motivate youth, she congratulated Malala Yousafzai and said, “Malala is a young girl from Pakistan and she has recently received the Nobel peace prize, so I think it is very much achievable in Pakistan.”

Explaining the subject, she said that empowerment is when you can make your own choices. It is about control of having one's own life.

She shared the aspects of life from different historical contexts wherein she said that the roles for males and females have never been devised in any given society, and it had been different in various societies throughout history. She said that the roles in our society have also been devised through customs and traditions, however, these have changed with time and we have to move forward in accepting the diversity of roles for men and women.

She said that the level of decision making is actually a test for empowerment. Thereby, she urged the youth to work a lot and show commitment towards empowerment of women, and hoped that we can achieve it as a nation.

Ending her words, she asked the participants to share their drawings and found that only two participants had drawn an image of a woman farmer. She asked the youth whether they know the number of female farmers in the rural areas of Pakistan? She informed them that more than 60% women work in the fields in the rural areas of the country. Thus, she sensitized the youth while involving them in the exercise. “We do not acknowledge women as even a farmer in Pakistan,” she said while leaving the dice.

Later, Ms. Shahida Kazmi, Advisor to WFP, shared a presentation of clips of various cases of violence against women in the country. She said that women have been suffering for years in Pakistan, and we have only moved forward this much that we can speak about it. She



Ms Rifat Shams addressing the session of women empowerment where she asked the participants to draw an image of a farmer

said that bombardment of women in the media is not the empowerment of women. She asked the female participants to ask themselves how much support have they received when they wanted to do something.



Shahida Kazmi, Advisor, WFP spoke to the youth and urged them to make their women empowered

She said that even if she is economically empowered, a woman is not empowered in Pakistan. She said that more than 60% of women who start earning become victim in their families, workplace and society. She said that women do not have social security in Pakistan, so even if she highlights some inequality or injustice, there comes threat as well, and the people usually just forget after a few days.

“We talk more but our implementing authorities do not do their job. It is achievable if we all put efforts. If you've at this level right course of thoughts, it will be achieved,” she said while talking to the young souls.

While asking the youth to work for empowerment of women, she said, “You do not need to be policy makers or someone who will make a big change, start from a little level, start from your home, and then it is fully achievable in Pakistan.”

“You can change things, you can change pattern of thinking, let's take this courage, let's take this motive. You don't need to come on roads. You have to begin from your close interactions; try to think differently, try

to act differently,” she said while concluding her words.

Lastly, the chief guest for the occasion, Mr. Lars Nordrum, took the dice. The youth from the country were excited to see a foreign diplomat from a country where women are considered to be far more empowered from Pakistan. While sharing importance of the role and energy of youth, he candidly began and said that he wished he could also call himself young, but it's past. He shared that his mother was a feminist and she fought for women's rights in Norway in 1960's and 1970's.

“Youth plays a pivotal role in socio-economic development in any society. Without doubts, you are the future,” said Mr. Nordrum. “It is responsibility of youth of Pakistan to shape up the future,” he added.



Lars Nordrum, Head of Mission, Royal Norwegian Embassy addressing the participants of National Youth Summit 2014

While informing the magnitude of the female population in the world, he said that 50% of all of us, half of us are women. He said that there is a great force within this group of women and girls for change, and it is all our responsibility to help, protect and ensure that that change happens.

Observing the patterns, he said that women and girls rights remain a challenge in Pakistan. He said that we've witnessed that their fundamental rights are even not respected. Explaining it's important, he said that it is in interest of all of us, men and women, boys and girls, and especially youth to support and contribute in the empowerment of women in this country.

He said that he's witnessed in other countries where women empowerment has resulted in positive influence on education, literacy, health, and helped to strengthen social and economic fabric. He said that his country pays special emphasis on education and development cooperation around the world, and also in Pakistan.

Making a comparison, he shared that his country has come quiet far in terms of women empowerment and it has benefitted all, both men and women. He added that his country had several female prime ministers, even the current one, and generals, chiefs of police, top leaders of business, etc. He added that the law in Norway provides equal rights to all citizens regardless of gender. Yet, there is still a struggle going on even in Norway.

He shared that Norway was at one point of time where Pakistan is today, and urged the youth to work for the cause, as it would also benefit their country, society and communities. "And there is a path towards tremendous progress. It is a struggle. It doesn't come by itself," added Mr. Nordrum while telling the youth participants about the importance of women empowerment.

While giving example of cricket to the young people, Mr. Nordrum said that working for women empowerment is not a T20, it's a test match. He said that one has to be in it for the long run. "There will be problems, hurdles and setbacks. And you need to be determined in order to achieve progress in this sphere," he added. He said that it's not only for women to work for it, but even men as women rights in Norway were achieved through fight by the men.

***Session: How Youth can contribute to the Society***

The session was taken by Mr. Naeem Mirza, Chief Operating Officer, Aurat Foundation, who initially shared that the complex issues have



The youth from all across Pakistan took deep interest in different sessions of the National Youth Summit 2014

spread across the globe. He shared that the major problems currently in Pakistan are due to the capitalist system which drives on capital and money, which challenges the centuries old values and traditions of humanity, since commodities are more important which creates a consumer society. “We have a fractured modernity, while our institutions are not strong enough to manage it,” said Mr. Mirza while explaining it.

He apprised the participants that globalization has been in two ways. One is capitalist one where the capital has gone global. Second is the means of communication, which is unprecedented globalized communication. He added that it has generated information, knowledge and wisdom, and the youth must stand aware and able to understand multiple contexts in order to move on in their lives. He said that the youth has to understand and differentiate the messages of communication, defining difference between capital based advertorial and a message. He said that this whole change has resulted in creation of a new civilization in the modern world. “Our modern civilization is currently moving through its own initial phase,” he told the young participants.

While explaining the concept to the youth, he said that modern society has inflicted individualism in the lives of common people which has further created selfishness and it has also reached to narcissism. He said that sometimes, even some societies also get indulged in narcissism and sometimes a civilizational narcissism also takes place and which further results in individualism. He said that it removes empathy and creates apathy in the society, and urged the youth to stay aware of these changes.

While emphasizing on the importance of interpersonal communication, he said that the modern communication tools have made personal communication into impersonal communication. He said it is one of the major causes of apathy, and thus he urged youth to make an effort to create empathy, personal relations and collective approach for a better future of Pakistan. He urged the youth saying, “youth needs to increase interpersonal relations and networking and try to increase cultural expressions in the society.”

While sharing the global scenario, he said that girls and women have come to the fore in the last 100 years in every field, and they have made exemplary progress that cannot be stopped as it is a new wave and they have to come forward themselves. He said that the world has changed vastly in the last 100 years, and the youth of Pakistan has to observe and understand these global developments. He urged youth to follow the better values of the modern civilization, and asked them to particularly focus on the role of women in the society.



COO Aurat Foundation, Mr. Naeem Mirza addressing the youth giving his perspective on history, civilization, morality and women rights

While further talking about modern means of communication, he said that in the contemporary times, knowledge is source of economy, which has made us knowledge based societies. Further sharing with youth, he said that every society has to follow contemporary values or otherwise they get destroyed. He explained that there are 3 contemporary values currently. One is democracy. Second is tolerance, and the third is respect of others view point. He said that therefore we need to promote culture of discussion and dialogue in our society. “We need to have confidence in ourselves. This is our responsibility to see around and try to find solutions to various problems despite the fact that they may be difficult,” said Mr. Mirza to charge their souls for stepping up their efforts. This hall's audience needs to learn deeply to make this all happen were the words for the participants of the summit showing the importance of the gathering of young people from around the country.

***Session: Changing Trends in Context of Evolution of Media***

Urooj Raza Sayyami, prominent female journalist associated with Roze & Capital TV, spoke to the participants of the summit in this session. She said that media is a major source of information in any society, and it has played a pivotal role in the development of Pakistani society. She said that one could not imagine speaking about issues of human rights, women rights or reproductive rights without the evolution of media. Similarly, she said that the present political empowerment and strengthened democracy is also one of the major contributions of media to the society.

She said that it also plays role in depicting and transforming the arts and culture in the society. She also termed it as one of the major means of advocacy. She shared that it is the mean that highlights the social issues, problems and matters that need to reach to the people. While responding to various queries, she shared the overall working of media and the studios with the young people. She also spoke about the working of a studio and newsrooms giving them inner bites of recording a program, or how a live program runs on the TV channels.

While sharing about the challenges of independent journalism, she said that media has a code of conduct which it is supposed to follow. However, she shared that there have been instances where it has breached the code of conduct, and she said that there are discussions underway amongst journalists around the country that everybody needs to remain within the ambit of the agreed code.



Urooj Raza spoke to the youth about the evolution of media in Pakistan and the way they can engage with it to represent their views

She said that since Pakistani media's independence has been very recent, therefore there are a number of challenges, however she urged youth not to consider it as an anti-state entity. She said that media is very much a part of the society and all the actors in it are their very own people. She said that since there are issues in every sphere of our various institutions, media is a similar affecttee. Yet, she hoped that people like the participants of the summit would take the lead themselves to join the media and work for its betterment.

She said that despite all flaws, the independence of media is necessary and it should remain so in order to let advance the country. While talking about several subjects that the media doesn't cover, she said, "We have to be concerned about the business factor as well, since it is more of a business thing now." She said that there are business interests of those who are running media businesses, and thus, they expect returns on their investment. She said that this results in an effort for ratings, which can only be increased through spices in the news, current affairs and programs.

However, she said that there are a number of journalists and media entities which are putting efforts to get out of the ratings syndrome and they are committed towards high standard journalism. She urged the youth to stay aware of the changes taking place around them in their communities, cities, nationally and internationally. She urged them to read more than one newspaper, and also their opinion pages to stay aware of all the changes currently taking place around them.

Ending her session, she said that the youth of Pakistan need to engage and involve media in their lives, and put effort to join at multiple levels of journalism so that they can represent their point of view as well.

#### **Stage Play: "Pakistan is One"**

A stage play was arranged at the summit on the subject of division in the nation and lack of respect for cultural diversity. The summit participants arranged it to share the aspects of society in a way that message could be given on the issue. The plot of the play discussed the lack of empathy in the society where everybody is focused towards personal being while there is no concern for others. It also discussed the issues such as corruption, women rights and issues of trans-gender in the country.

The play staged the ignorance of youth towards seriousness of life and the history of Pakistan. While following their lives with comedy and musical, suddenly an old man joins in and speaks that the older generations have given many sacrifices to make this country. The old man speaks that we are so divided in Punjabis, Sindhis



The participants of the summit acting during the stage show, "Pakistan is One" for the guests and participants



and Pathans, but I cannot find a single Pakistani.

At this moment, a voice comes from the background. The voice is of the father of the nation, Quaid-e-Azam, saying “We've already given sacrifices but to protect this country, we will have to give more sacrifices.” The characters are unable to recognize the voice and keep guessing the name.

The play helped youth understand aspects of nationhood, knowing ones history, importance of cultural harmony and respecting the cultural diversity and sensitized them about the rights of women, children and transgender.

#### ***Discussion: Social Action Projects – Summit Resolution***

It was the last session of the day where the participants were briefed about the idea of social action projects, and what are they expected to do. They were informed that the whole process is structured to involve them in social action where they can contribute to the society at whatever scale possible for them. The social action projects of 2013 summit were also shared with them. They were also informed that the certificate of participation will be given to them on submission of completion report of their respective projects.

In the session, teams were devised whereby the participants discussed their ideas which included projects from tree plantation to blood donation and formation of a cultural society in a private university.

Similarly, the participants were also briefed on the summit resolution, where they were asked to form groups and decide about the issues, challenges, threats and opportunities for the young people in Pakistan. They were briefed that the resolution is shared with all the concerned stakeholders, and thus they should come up with specific ideas, objectives or needs.

**Day 3: Cultural & Musical Evening – 13<sup>th</sup> December 2014**

The third day of the Summit brought a Walk for Peace, where the youth urged all ethnicities, communities and tribes in the country to promote peace in the society. It included a session on the importance of education in Pakistan. It also included a cultural and musical evening where musicians from different regions performed in various local languages, including Pashto, Punjabi, Seraiki, Sindhi and Kashmiri languages, while a local dance of Balochistan, called Attan, was also featured in the evening.

**Walk for Peace**

The participants gathered at the gate of Fatima Jinnah Park with banners and streamers and walked through the park to Aiwan-e-Quaid for peace. The purpose of the walk was to share the importance of peace in the country, where they could freely walk as a group, with boys, girls, men and women together. A number of guests and visitors also joined the youth and appreciated their efforts for peace, which is a dire need of the country presently.



The youth from across the country walked for peace to share their zeal and commitment for the cause



Mr Mubashar Nabi, CEO ACT International spoke and urged the youth to utilize their energies in a positive manner

**Session: How youth can utilize its energy?**

The session was taken by Mr. Mubashar Nabi, Chief Executive Officer, ACT International who initiated with sharing his own life with young people. He shared that he has not studied from an international university; however he said that he had crossed ladders of life through hard work and commitment. He said that while he sees that there are more than 60% of young people in Pakistan, yet their energies are not being utilized to the full extent.

“When we say youth, it means its energy, and when we say energy, there are

different kinds of energy. And all kinds of energies need direction for conversion. If our youth is directionless, then this energy is either dangerous or useless,” he shared with the participants of the summit.

He further said that to get direction, the youth needs to focus on want, which includes want of knowledge, want of doing something, want of knowing one's own self. He said that as a result of these wants, the youth is going to itself have enough ability to deal with the challenges of tomorrow.

“The barriers cannot stop you from achieving. What you need is commitment, competence and tolerance which are the most important factors for success,” he added while talking to the participants of the summit.

While talking of the energy the young people have, he said that the youth has the time, space and energy to become change agents and to work for the causes that they believe would help them in future. He said that he has observed that the most despicable thing amongst the young people is that they do not read. He urged them to start reading books, be it a novel or a literature book, an autobiography or a historical one. He said that reading provides a different kind of exposure; it enhances the canvass of thinking in our minds.

#### ***Session: Role of Youth in Changing Context***

Mr. Saeed Ul Hassan, Education Advisor at Oxfam GB took the session for the participants of the summit. He said that he has been seeing frustration and depression in the eyes of young people around him, and he feels disturbed to see this. He said that the youth should not leave hope, and said that the things change with passage of time. He asked youth to be patient and work selflessly for what they belief, and promote culture of acceptance amongst each other.

He shared that while there are various controversies regarding Malala Yousafzai in Pakistani society, yet he said that her message is very important for all of us. He said that we all need to stand together for the right of our girls to get education. He shared a wonderful poem on education of girls, which was greatly appreciated by the participants from all across the country. The title of the poem was “Because I'm a girl.”



Mr Saeed ul Hassan, Advisor OXFAM GB, addressing the youth where he also shared a beautiful poem "Because I'm a Girl!"



**Because I'm a girl**

*A father asked his daughter; Study why should you study  
 I have sons a plenty who can study; Girl, why should you study  
 The daughter tells her father; since you ask here's why I must study  
 Because I m a girl; I must study  
 Long denied the right; I must study  
 For me dreams to take fight; I must study  
 Knowledge brings new light; I must study  
 For the battles I must fight; I must study  
 To avoid destitution; I must study  
 To win independence; I must study  
 To fight frustration; I must study*

*To flight inspiration; I must study  
 To fight men's violence; I must study  
 To end my silence; I must study  
 To challenge patriarchy; I must study  
 To demolish our hierarchy; I must study  
 To mover a faith I can trust; I must study  
 To make laws which are just; I must study  
 To sweep centuries of dust; I must study  
 To challenge what I hate; I must study  
 To know right from wrong; I must study  
 To find the voice that is strong; I must study  
 To write feminist song; I must study  
 To create a world where girls belong; I must study  
 Because I m a girl; I must study*



He shared that Shazia and Kainat, school's best friends of Malala, who were also affected in the attack back in 2012 when Malala was attempted to assassinate believe it's one of the greatest gifts for them. He shared their views that as it doesn't mention Malala, Kainat or Shazia, but it depicts a girl and shows the importance of education for women.

While talking on the theme of the 2014 summit, he said that if culture is the context where we are present, and arts and education take us to destination, then I think we are on the right track. He said that if youth can harmonize themselves with peace through arts and culture by their beautiful diversity, and explore unity in diversity, then I think we are aligned with culture and context.

Talking of the peace, he shared a famous quote, "There is no way to peace, peace is the way." He said that if arts, education and all mediums and tools are taking us to peace, then that's the most important thing.

**Session: Education and its importance**

Mr. Asif Malik, Assistant Registrar of Comsats University took the dice to speak to the youth about the importance of education and

whether the youth is aware of the rights they have.

Beginning with the words about the importance of education, he shared that there was an interesting agreement between Churchill and Hitler in the Second World War which had terms that Germany will not attack two universities of United Kingdom i.e. University of Cambridge and University of Oxford. Likewise, United Kingdom shall not attack two universities of Germany i.e. University of Heidelberg and University of Gottingen.

He shared that Churchill later informed the people after defeating Germany that if our universities had been destroyed and all the Europe had been saved, it could never develop again. However, if all the Europe had destroyed and these four universities had still existed, it was not very difficult to rebuild again.

He said that while he sees young people around him working hard to get grades, yet he believes that we need to learn to help others and have empathy for others as well. He said that the youth has a role and the time to work for the development and betterment of the society, and they must put all their efforts towards it in order to bring the country out of the current

crisis.



Mr Asif Malik, Assistant Registrar Comsats University speaking to the youth about education and its importance



Participants from Kashmir displaying their traditional dress and ornaments at the Summit

#### ***Cultural Evening: Concert of the Regional Musicians***

As part of efforts towards cultural integration, a cultural and musical evening was celebrated during the summit where participants displayed their own cultures, spoke about cultural and ethnic misunderstandings and discussed how they can engage in promoting harmony. The cultural evening was attached to the concert of regional musicians where the songs were played in all major local languages of Pakistan.

Mr. Nori Ashida, First Secretary, Embassy of Japan was the guest of honor who said that he really enjoys the culture and heritage of Pakistan. He also performed at the Summit and song two songs in Urdu language, which was greatly appreciated by the youth and the guests. A visiting delegation of Asian African Rural

# NATIONAL YOUTH SUMMIT 2014

Development Organization (AARDO) also arrived at the summit, bringing in delegates of various Asian and African countries to the National Youth Summit 2014.

Apart from dancing to the tunes of regional music, the participants also witnessed a tribal Baloch dance, known as Attan, which was



Some of the glimpses of enthusiasm at the cultural evening and concert of regional musicians at the National Youth Summit 2014

*A Special Program, Music for Peace'bn Pakistan Television*

*At the cultural evening-concert of the regional musicians, Pakistan Television conducted a special program on the idea of the session titled, Music for Peace."The program shared the overall objective of the summit, along with the idea how music plays role in removing the gaps between different cultures, communities and ethnicities. It featured several interviews, discussion on cultural aspects of Pakistan and the way music enthralled the audience and engaged them in a manner where music of different regions of Pakistan contributed towards peace and harmony in the society.*



A group of participants from Balochistan performing a local traditional dance, popularly known as Attan

presented by the summit participants from Balochistan. The day concluded with open affection to all ethnicities, regions, languages and cultures of Pakistan where youth was happy to know each other's values and traditions.



Guests and participants are enjoying the cultural evening which included concert of regional musicians. The guests from Asian African Rural Development Organization (AARDO) are seen in the front row.



#### Day 4: Social Action & Resolution– 14<sup>th</sup> December 2014

The last day of the summit was led by the facilitators to finalize social action projects and the summit resolution. As per the earlier team division, the participants had devised the social action projects. A total of 27 teams were formed who shared their plans for the social action projects.

Similarly, a discussion moved on between the groups for the finalization of the summit resolution. The youth had different ideas, and versatile opinions. Some of the participants believed that education is the foremost need, and the government should create single syllabi for students all around the country. Similarly, another group demanded of events and activities for youth which can engage them in positive activities. A group also wanted stern action against drug users, and wanted the government to legislate proper laws as well as implement them to protect the youth from the menace.

A group of female participants demanded more rights to women, protection from harassment on roads and protection from abuse. They were of the opinion that they could not walk freely on the streets and would face harassment through different means on a daily basis.

However, all the participants agreed to a resolution wherein the youth from all over Pakistan demanded unity and debate on national issues in a serious manner.

The participants formally agreed to the resolution calling the government and other stakeholders in the words, “There is a dire need to unite the people under one umbrella in Pakistan, and thus there should be one platform for sports, arts and entertainment for every Pakistani. There should be social, cultural and educational programmes across the country, which can help remove the gap between ethnicities, cultures, clans and tribes and which should also be able to define our moral and ethical values. The current challenges of Pakistan demand that there should be a debate on national issues on every aspect of our society including poverty, extremism, women and diversity”

The event ended with a brief address of CEO ACT International who asked the youth to complete their social action projects in time, with enthusiasm and passion. He also thanked all the partners of the National Youth Summit 2014 including HEC, AJKRSP, Aurat Foundation, Commoner, Pakistan Observer, CDA and Valley Trackers.



Participants performing at the last session of National Youth Summit 2014



### Social Action Projects

The Social Action Projects is a permanent feature of National Youth Summit which strives to inculcate activism in the young people from different parts of the country. It engages youth to perform small scale interventions in their communities which can enhance their exposure to work with different stakeholders. A number of such projects were devised during the National Youth Summit 2014. A few ambitious projects are being shared below, while the final completion report of the projects will be shared after their completion in March 2015.

#### **Name of Group: Green A**

**Number of Participants: 10**

Proposed Intervention: Green A devised a plan to conduct a plantation drive in Islamabad. They discussed a number of challenges and found that the deforestation in the country has led to several environmental challenges, and a small group of young people can get involved in efforts of plantation as well as engage their peers for the cause. The idea is expected to increase awareness on tree plantation, and involve these young souls from the beginning to plant the trees instead of cutting them down.

#### **Name of Group: Lofty Aces**

**Number of Participants: 13**

Proposed Intervention: Lofty Aces proposed to put efforts to establish a Society for Cultural Affairs in Comsats University. The group discussed that there are several challenges regarding the cultural integration, and there is a major lack of activities related to arts, traditions or culture. Thus, the group proposed that they will engage with administration of the university to form a society under the leadership of management which should be administered by the students and may represent all regions of Pakistan. It is expected to hold dialogues, plays, musical evenings, cultural galas and other such events for integration of different communities and promotion of the diverse culture of Pakistan.

#### **Name of Group: Cleaning Badge**

**Number of Participants: 06**

Proposed Intervention: Cleaning Badge intended to clean all the country, and find the trash in the city as hazardous for population and the environment alike. Yet, while they are too young, and with limited resources, they planned to launch cleanliness drive in their own vicinity. The group members belonged from different parts of the country, and each member has been held responsible to make a group within their own cities. The groups are expected to conduct monthly cleanliness drive and engage more and more people, which would ensure its sustainability as well as increase the number of people for the cause.

#### **Name of Group: Healthy Pakistan**

**Number of Participants: 08**

Proposed Intervention: Healthy Pakistan proposed a blood donation campaign in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The group discussed several options amongst themselves and found that there is a major crisis of finding blood in case of emergencies, and thus they initiated this idea where they would conduct a campaign for blood donation and keep a database of all individuals who could be contacted in case of emergencies. The database will also be shared with the public and private hospitals in order to create a sustainable structure of the project.

## Testimonials

“ I was overwhelmed by the passion of young people. The event was the second one where tens of young Pakistani participated, which is still very tiny magnitude. However, light gains makes a heavy purse and constant dropping wears away the stone. These efforts will bring good results in the future of Pakistan, Insha Allah.



**Nori Ashida**  
First Secretary  
Embassy of Japan

“ I find it a great pleasure to see such an enthusiastic gathering from around the country, who are motivated to bring about a change in their own and the lives of others around them. I think that such opportunities do allow the young people to get an exposure which can help them in their lives ahead. Kudos to the people who managed it, and my best wishes for your more such endeavors.

**Urooj Raza Sayami**



“ I was overwhelmed to see such a grand congregation of young people from around the country who were committed and engaged in activism, who were enthusiastic to discuss issues and challenges, and who were ready to strive for excellence in their lives ahead. I think it will certainly help in letting them work for the development of this country in a better way.”



**Dr. Manzoor Awan**  
Deputy Country Director  
OXFAM

### Our Partners



Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC), is an independent, autonomous, and constitutionally established institution of primarily funding, overseeing, regulating, and accrediting the higher education efforts in Pakistan. HEC is responsible for formulating higher education policy and quality assurance to meet the international standards as well as accrediting academic degrees, development of new institutions, and uplift of existing institutions in Pakistan.



Aurat Publication and Information Service Foundation (Aurat Foundation/AF) is a national, non-profit, non-governmental organization committed to create widespread awareness and commitment for a just, democratic and caring society in Pakistan, where women and men are recognized as equals, with the right to lead their lives with self-respect and dignity. Over the last 28 years, Aurat Foundation has come to be recognized as one of the leading institutions creating, facilitating and strengthening civil society groups and networks.



Azad Jammu & Kashmir Rural Support Programme (AJKRSP) is a prime grassroots development organization with a mandate to undertake community development projects by establishing and empowering grassroots institutions throughout Azad Jammu & Kashmir. It also aims to support and sustain public-private efforts towards poverty alleviation. AJKRSP focuses on under-developed areas and vulnerable groups by forging effective linkages between relevant stakeholders.



Valley Trackers is the premier public-private firm of AJK tourism department and Ministry of Tourism, Government of AJK, registered in Azad Kashmir for the promotion of tourism and adventure sports along with recreational events for youth. It is an eminent hospitality and event management company and its portfolio comprises chains of hotels and recreational centers. It regularly arranges events and activities such as paragliding, exhibitions and festivals around the year for youth in particular, and to provide recreation to the community at large.

### Other Partners :







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