



ISLAMABAD POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

5th Floor, Evacuee Trust Complex, Sir Aga Khan Road, F-5/1, Islamabad, Pakistan
Tel: + 92 51 9211346-49; Fax + 92 51 9211350
Email: ipripak@ipripak.org; Website: www.ipripak.org

PRESS RELEASE

“PAKISTAN NEEDS A CORPS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW EXPERTS TO SAFEGUARD NATIONAL INTERESTS.”

- *Ahmer Bilal Soofi at IPRI Guest Lecture*

16 July 2019



Pakistan needs a “battalion” of young lawyers and legal experts working within the government since “lawfare” i.e. warfare based on legal instruments is being used in the current world order. Not only should the legal fraternity take interest in policy law, the government should also encourage young legal minds by opening up its doors to them. This was stated by **Mr Ahmer Bilal Soofi**, former Federal Minister of Law and Special Envoy of Prime Minister of Pakistan and founder of Research Institute of Law (RSIL) at the Guest Lecture on “**Pakistan’s Achilles’ Heel: A Case for International Law and Diplomacy**” organised by the Islamabad Policy Research Institute here in Islamabad, today.

Mr Ahmer Bilal Soofi discussed Pakistan’s domestic, regional and global legal challenges, and the corrective measures required to address them. He outlined how Pakistan can present its case more effectively if the battles in the courtrooms are well fought. Mr Soofi

also analysed Pakistan’s preparedness on legal grounds when it comes to dealing with India and state-sponsored terrorism in order to make the country’s case stronger on political, economic as well as legal fronts. He reiterated that Pakistan should aggressively pursue strategic legal cases, while being open to negotiations on commercial ones. “This would help restore international investors’ confidence in Pakistan.”



Mr Soofi pointed out that the Kulbhashan Jadhav case, being heard at the International Court of Justice, is one of the few instances in which credible, irrefutable evidence of terrorist activities against Pakistan has emerged. “It has the potential of serving as a turning point through which Pakistan can project to the world something it has not been able to argue with as much success owing to India’s lawfare against us in international relations. India has made their goalpost very hard to achieve since it now represents a credible challenge to the two-decade long Indian narrative of an innocent state being hounded by us”, he said.

Mr Soofi asserted that legal jargon is a tool of real politick and statecraft, and stressed that Pakistan’s weak position in the international sphere is not only a direct consequence of lack of understanding of international legal affairs and legal expertise, but also inability to fight the battle of perceptions. In this regard, he highlighted the 2008 Mumbai Attacks case and the legal avenues pursued by Pakistan in its aftermath. “While lawfare has begun to be weaponized by states, Pakistan failed in perception management in this case and as a result the fallout is being felt to this day, especially on the Kashmir freedom struggle. “We could not document the distance we



wanted to create and the Mumbai case caused multidimensional damage to our international image. As a nation, Pakistan must also be equipped to defeat such strategies being employed against us and invest in goodwill capital”, he stressed. The former Federal Law Minister also said that Pakistan needs to invest in our overseas lawyers and focus on legal diplomacy and bring back Kashmir to the centre point where it belongs.

Earlier, welcoming representatives from the law fraternity, diplomats and academicians, **Ambassador Vice Admiral (R) Khan Hasham bin Saddique**, President of IPRI said that this was an apt time for this talk as several international legal cases involving Pakistan have either been recently concluded or will conclude soon. He expressed the hope that the discourse would be beneficial since legal dimensions are gaining currency in international affairs. “Pakistan needs a comprehensive legal framework which enables us to defend the country’s national interests both within and outside. Lack of expertise on legal aspects, whether related to diplomacy, economy, armed conflict, or the environment etc., integral to state institutions, often hampers progress and is an impediment in statecraft.” He said that IPRI will undertake and sponsor research in this vital field of study in order to provide inputs to the government.

