As American and NATO forces make a phased withdrawal from Afghanistan starting summer of 2011 leading to a declared total disengagement by 2014; radicalism and governance are likely to gain new regional salience-- improving regional governance and security will increasingly fall upon Afghanistan’s neighbors and near neighbors (Iran, Pakistan, India, Russia and Central Asian States). These regional actors had been engaged in the Afghan war and its spillover effects--civil war, cross border terrorism and civil strife since the late 1970s. Pakistan has been and for the foreseeable future is likely to be a key player in the region. Pakistan’s involvement in Afghanistan has led to transformative political, economic and social consequences at home. Breeding religious militancy, escalation in suicide attacks disrupting societal peace and harmony and deepening the crisis of governance. Over three million Afghan refugees moved into Pakistan and changed the demographic composition and culture of many parts of Pakistan: heroine trade, drug addiction, proliferation of portable arms and cross border terrorism emerged as serious new governance challenges. Consequently, over these decades a complex web of jihad, sectarianism and extremist groups became a potent force, changing the complexion of Pakistani State and society.

Historically and current trends clearly show that for Pakistan and its policy makers defense and security concerns remain ‘India centric’. These concerns have led the Pakistani state to cultivate and maintain links with militant religious groups. In the post 9/11 period Pakistan came under enormous pressure from the US and the Western Powers to break its ‘perceived’ and ‘real’ connections with the militant groups. Reluctantly and half heartedly, when the Pakistani State tried to rein in these groups under intense international pressure, a full scale insurgency erupted leading to 304 suicide attacks since 2002. Resultantly the socio-economic fabric of Pakistan state and society has been ruptured and disrupted. But Pakistan has yet to demonstrate that it has made a clean break from its previous pattern and there is a growing awareness and realization among civil society, academia and media circles that Pakistan needs to redefine its national security paradigm- move away from ‘India centric’ to a broader formulation of counter terrorism & de-radicalization strategy. That would imply a re-defined national interest informing Pakistan’s national security paradigm, its Afghan and regional policy. This calls for developing some minimal consensus on an alternative policy framework by engaging all stakeholders including civil bureaucracy, political and military leadership, academia, researchers and civil society.

The Centre for Public Policy & Governance (CPPG) has recently published a Special Issue on Pakistan & Afghanistan of its Quarterly Research & News which explores issues pertaining to Pakistan’s Afghan Policy as well as proposes a framework for a counter terrorism and extremism strategy. CPPG plans to continue this process forward through a day long policy dialogue among all stakeholders to facilitate the process of consensus building within Pakistan. We would like to invite you to participate in the dialogue and share your insights on the subject.
Structure:
The year 2011 could become a defining year for Pakistan to help stabilize Afghanistan and to formulate a comprehensive counter terrorism and extremism policy to disrupt, destroy and dismantle Al Qaeda and Taliban led militant networks and ensure regional security. Pakistan also needs to devise a strategy to ensure internal peace and citizen security and externally be recognized as a responsible state that is capable of protecting its national interests and territorial integrity. A day long policy dialogue to explore the issues involved and to build towards a policy consensus is being organized by CPPG on Thursday July 28th, 2011. The Dialogue is divided into the following three sessions and will be chaired by Ms. Bushra Gohar, Member National Assembly(MNA) & Chairperson, Standing Committee on Women’s Development.

Tentative Program
Informal Registration 9:00 – 9:30am

This session aims to explore the possible scenarios for Pakistan within the framework of the American Afghan Exit Plan while discussing Pakistan’s policy options based on its strategic interests in the region.
   - Dialogue Initiators: Mr. Ahmed Rashid, Prof. Sajjad Naseer, Amb (r) Iqbal Ahmad Khan

   Tea

2. Session 2: Counter Terrorism & Extremism Strategy 11:30 – 1:30pm
This session aims to discuss the principles and guidelines for a comprehensive counter terrorism and extremism strategy. Beginning with the aspect of threat assessment, it will explore war, domestic & regional policy dimensions, and governance as contributory factors to radicalism and terrorism.
   - Dialogue Initiators: Mr. Khaled Ahmed, Mr. Amir Rana, Mr. Sarmad Saeed Khan, Mr. Imtiaz Gul

   Lunch

3. Session 3: Way Forward 2:30 – 4:30pm
Based on the analysis of previous two sessions leading to a re-articulation of Pakistan’s National Interests, this session will try to build a consensus on Pakistan’s Afghan Policy and a Counter Terrorism & Extremism Strategy.
   - Discussion Facilitated by Dr. Saeed Shafqat

   Tea

Venue: E-002, E-Building, Forman Christian College (A Chartered University)

RSVP: Nayyer Aftab
nayyeraftab@fccollege.edu.pk, 0321.406.8861
Speaker Profiles:

**Mr. Ahmed Rashid** is the Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia correspondent for the Far Eastern Economic Review and The Daily Telegraph of London with twenty five year reporting experience. He is the author of *The Resurgence of Central Asia: Islam or Nationalism, Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia* and most recently, *Descent into Chaos: How the war against Islamic extremism is being lost in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia.*

**Mr. Amir Rana** is the founding member and Director, Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies and a Research Analyst. He edits the English Research Journal ‘Conflict and Peace Studies’ and Urdu Monthly “Tajziat”. He has written several books including *Jihad-e-Kashmir-o-Afghanistan, Gateway to Terrorism, Dynamics of Taliban Insurgency in FATA* (co-authored) and forthcoming *Dynamics of Political Islam in Pakistan*.

**Ms. Bushra Gohar** is the Senior Vice President of the Awami National Party (ANP) and Member of Parliament. She is Chair, National Assembly’s Standing Committee on Women’s Development; and Member, Finance and Revenue, Interior and Kashmir Affairs Committees. She has been a member of the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW); Chair, South Asia Partnership-International (SAP-I) and Regional & Global VP., International Council of Social Welfare (ICSW).

**Mr. Imtiaz Gul** is a correspondent for The Friday Times and German broadcaster Deutsche Welle. A career journalist, he writes columns for The News and hosts a weekly political talk show on Hum TV. His books include *The Most Dangerous Place: Pakistan’s Lawless Frontier, The Unholy Nexus: Afghan-Pakistan Relations under the Taliban Militia* and edited volumes including *Liberalism, Islam and Human Rights*.

**Ambassador (r) Iqbal Ahmad Khan** is a career diplomat in the Pakistan Foreign Service. He writes regularly on International Affairs and diplomatic relations for various newspapers including the Daily Times. He has served as Pakistan’s Ambassador to Iran and Bangladesh.

**Mr. Khaled Ahmed** is Consulting Editor of The Friday Times with a 30-year career in journalism. His most recent book is *Sectarian War: Pakistan’s Sunni-Shia Violence and its links to the Middle East*. Some of his other books include *Musharraf Years: Religious Developments in Pakistan and Pakistan: Behind the Ideological Mask* and *Pakistan: The State in Crisis*. He currently also serves as the Director, South Asian Media School, Lahore.

**Prof. Sajjad Naseer** is Senior Fellow and Professor of Political Science at the Lahore School of Economics. He has published extensively in Academic Journals concentrating on Political Science, Strategic & Security affairs, Public Policy and Pakistan-India Relations. Some of his papers include *Federalism and Constitutional Development in Pakistan, Pakistan – U.S. Relations 1988 -97: An Appraisal*.

**Dr. Saeed Shafqat** is Director, Centre for Public Policy & Governance, FC College and Chairman Board, Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI). His books include *New Perspectives on Pakistan: Visions for the Future, Contemporary Issues in Pakistan Studies, Civil- Military Relations in Pakistan*.
and Political System of Pakistan and Public Policy. He has published extensively on politics, security, governance, demographic change and civil service reform in Pakistan.

Mr. Sarmad Saeed Khan is currently Additional IGP Training. He has served as Deputy Commandant, National Police Academy, IG Northern Areas and in the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Liberia. His areas of expertise within policing are Community Policing, Stress Management and Human Rights.