



Invitation

Thursday, June 30th, 2011, 5 pm

Challenging the Secular State in Pakistan: the new Mobility of Radical Networks and the Transformation of the Terrorist Threat

Talk by Prof. Moonis Ahmar

The continuing upheaval and militancy in Pakistan have intensified the debate on why the government cannot come to terms with the violence. Though state institutions like the bureaucracy, military, judiciary, parliament and some non-state actors like the majority of political parties and a segment of media may appear to be secular, to a large extent, religious influence for political purposes continues to shape the mind-set and policies of those who wield considerable power. While the talk will focus on the polarisation between secularism and religious extremism, the transformation in the state, societal structures and the mindset of the younger generation, the key question is not the existence of the terrorist threat as such, which has manifested itself since long in Pakistan, but how that threat has become lethal over a period of time? How could militant and radical networks mushroom in Pakistan without any hindrance and what options should Pakistan explore to deal with the lethal transformation of the terrorist threat? How did the new regional parameters of the wider West and Central Asian region and the new mobility of militant networks, concepts and actors create new conditions for their proliferation? Can a secular Pakistan effectively deal with it and which role external players can play in the positive transformation of society to help curb extremism and militancy?

Moonis Ahmar is Professor of International Relations at the University of Karachi and Director of the Program on Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution. Dr. Ahmar has 27 years of academic experience in Pakistan and in different foreign universities and research think tanks. He is the author of two books, four monographs and has edited 15 books on different themes of International Relations. His field of specialization are conflict and security studies focusing on the Middle East, South Asia and the Central Asian regions. Currently, Dr. Ahmar is a DAAD Visiting fellow at the Conflict Studies and Management Program at the Willy Brandt School of Public Policy, University of Erfurt. He is pursuing his research on "Secular Road to the Management of Religious Extremism in Pakistan: Lessons from the European Experience."

Venue

Zentrum Moderner Orient
Kirchweg 33
Conference Hall

14129 Berlin

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