



Pashtun singers perform at a cultural festival. (Zartaj Ullah/USIP)



During his first official trip to Washington since taking office in 2018, **Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan** spoke to an audience of U.S. policymakers, scholars, and diplomats at the U.S. Institute of Peace following talks with President Trump. The prime minister discussed his meeting with President Trump, his hopes for an improved relationship with the United States, Pakistan's struggles with corruption and poverty, and the country's relations with its neighbors.

## CURRENT SITUATION

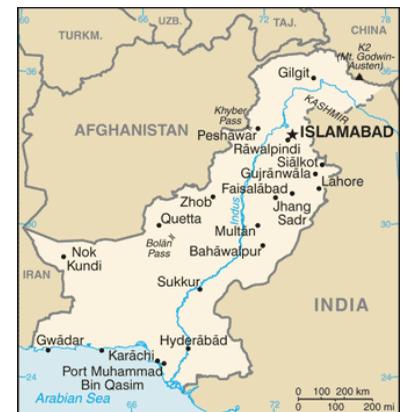
Pakistan continues to face multiple sources of internal and external conflict. While incidences of domestic terrorism have reduced, in part due to measures taken by the Pakistani state, extremism and intolerance of diversity has grown.

There is some recognition by the state that instead of merely kinetic responses holistic counterterrorism policies are needed to counteract this trend. The growing extremism has been fueled by a narrow vision of Pakistan's national identity, threatening the country's prospect for social cohesion and stability. The inability of state institutions to reliably provide peaceful ways to resolve grievances has encouraged groups to seek violence as a legitimate alternative.

While peaceful political transitions occurred in both 2013 and 2018, the country is still facing mounting debt crisis and a perennial trade imbalance on the economic front. Furthermore, Pakistan's high-profile disputes with neighboring India and Afghanistan have periodically resulted in violence and continue to pose a threat to regional and international security.

## USIP'S WORK

The U.S. Institute of Peace has conducted research and analysis and promoted dialogue in Pakistan since the 1990s, with a presence in the country since 2013. The Institute works to reverse Pakistan's growing intolerance of diversity and increase social cohesion. It



## USIP PAKISTAN PROGRAM (2013-2020)

130,000+

YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATED IN PEACEBUILDING ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED BY USIP PARTNERS IN PAKISTAN

1,000+

WOMEN PARTICIPATED IN INITIATIVES PROMOTING INCLUSION OF WOMEN IN PEACE AND SECURITY DISCOURSE

165

YOUTH GRADUATED FROM A DERADICALIZATION PROGRAM AND SUCCESSFULLY REINTEGRATED INTO SOCIETY

25,000+

CITIZENS PARTICIPATED IN EVENTS PROMOTING PEACE DURING THE 2013 AND 2018 NATIONAL ELECTIONS.

30

CITIES ACROSS ALL OF PAKISTAN WHERE USIP HAS SUPPORTED PEACEBUILDING INTERVENTIONS

supports local organizations that develop innovative ways to build peace and promote narratives of inclusion using media, arts, technology, dialogues, and education.

USIP works with state institutions in their efforts to be more responsive to citizens' needs, which can reduce sentiment for using violence to resolve grievances. It supports Pakistanis' work to improve police-community relations, promote greater access to justice, and strengthen inclusive democratic institutions and governance.

The Institute supports research in Pakistan to better understand drivers of peace and conflict. USIP works to support and shape international policies and programs that promote peace and tolerance within Pakistan, between Pakistan and its neighbors, and between Pakistan and the United States.

### USIP's Work in Pakistan Includes:

**Improving police-community relationship for effective law enforcement.** The Pakistani police have struggled with a poor relationship with the public categorized by mistrust and mistreatment. As a result, effective policing has been hindered. USIP has partnered with national and provincial police departments to aid in building police-community relationships and strengthening policing in Pakistan through training, capacity building, and social media engagement. Efforts have resulted in frameworks for legislative reform and over 160 million social media interactions.

**Building sustainable mechanisms for dialogue, critical thinking and peace education on university campuses.** Currently, 64% of Pakistan's population is under the age of 30. Among them, youth with access to higher education carry disproportionate influence in society. However, Pakistan's siloed education system does not allow interactions across diverse groups or campuses, leading to intolerance, and in some cases, radicalization. To tackle growing intolerance of diversity at university campuses, USIP has partnered with civil society and state institutions to support programs establishing sustainable mechanisms for dialogue, critical thinking, and peace education. The goal is to empower young people as the next generation of peacebuilders.

**Helping Pakistanis rebuild traditions of tolerance to counter extremists' demands for violence.** In Pakistan, religious militancy has eroded a traditional culture of music and poetry that favors free expression. USIP supports local cultural leaders in reviving performances and content that encourages tolerant coexistence. Much of the USIP-supported content has gone viral on social media, with some videos garnering more than 4.5 million views on Facebook.

**Support for peaceful elections to counter violence.** In advance of the 2018 general elections, USIP supported efforts to promote peaceful elections, with a particular focus on youth and women. One USIP partner developed a social media campaign that provided accessible civic education about electoral rights and processes, including avenues of accountability to prevent election-related violence and its many consequences. Multiple videos produced by the program went viral and the campaign overall reached over 19 million people.

**Convening of peace stakeholders.** USIP has convened over 45 events and policy dialogues on Pakistan in Washington since 2016. Past speakers include former Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif (twice), current Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, and current Finance Minister Asad Umar, among others. Our events include seminars, closed-door conversations and briefings, senior policy working groups that feed their deliberations directly to USG, and high-level track 1.5 and track 2 dialogues.