

Press Release

Three-day Third International Karachi Conference to kick off on November 6th 2015

Karachi, November 4, 2015: The Third International Karachi Conference, organized by the Karachi Conference Foundation (KCF), is going to be held on November 6th, 7th and 8th, 2015 at the Pakistan Arts Council, Karachi. This three-day conference is the main event organized by KCF and is held every year.

The Karachi Conference aims to celebrate Karachi's cultural mosaic and strives to establish a growing critical discourse on the city's historic evolution and its impact on Pakistan's development and culture. The conference will start at 4:00 PM on Friday the 6th with a series of film screenings which will go on till 10pm. The 7th and 8th of November will comprise of papers and presentations which will begin at 10:00 AM and continue till 6:00 in the evening.

In the recent past Karachi has been subject to a great amount of terrorism, creating confusion & fear in the minds of its citizens. But the people have taken a stand against the destruction of their city. KCF seeks to provide a platform to researchers, scholars and concerned citizens to discuss the issues and problems that they face. KCF supports all those who are against intolerance and provides them with a space to hold a discussion on peace and good governance. It is in light of these issues that the KCF again supports the spirit of *positivity* at its Conference.

Karachi is the largest city in Pakistan and one of the largest in the world, with a population of over 20 million, and still growing. Sprawling and diverse today, modern Karachi began as a small fortified trading post in 1729. Although the city is relatively young, the region into which the small trading post expanded has a rich heritage, with archaeological remains stretching back to the Neolithic period. In addition, the metropolitan area of the city contains Sufi shrines dating back to the 9th century, ancient Hindu temples, Jewish graveyards, Christian churches of the colonial period, as well as historic buildings and parks associated with the struggle against colonialism. and Pakistan's post-independence history.

The recent decades of Pakistan's history have been a time of social upheaval, unacknowledged by the dominant discourse which seeks to focus only on the geo-political aspects. But there is a new Pakistan in existence and it needs to be given voice. Karachi, as a microcosm of Pakistan, is perhaps the most important laboratory for the study of the socio-economic and cultural changes that are taking place within the country.

In addition to dealing with the above issues, the conference will bring together papers dealing with the city's history, its intangible cultures, issues of marginalized population as well as urbanism, demography, citizenship and conflict.

In continuation to the past practice of showcasing film making in and about Karachi, the first day is devoted exclusively to films. The Film Festival seeks to highlight some of the exciting new film talent that the city has been blessed with, and is dedicated to discovering and promoting the very best of Karachi's young cinematographers. It will enable local audiences to engage with a dynamic array of narrative and documentary work revolving around various themes of Karachi.

The Karachi Conference Foundation was been established by a group of professionals, scholars and activists from Karachi. In 2011 they came together to constitute the Executive Committee of the Karachi Conference Foundation. In November 2013, they held the first Karachi Conference at the Arts Council of Pakistan, Karachi, a very successful event that sparked a critical dialogue about the city.

The members of the foundation are engaged in undertaking and disseminating research on the archaeology, history, culture, built environment, socioeconomic & socio-political conditions of this city. Members include well-known scholars and writers such as Arif Hasan, Dr. Asma Ibrahim, Dr. Kaleemullah Lashari and Rumana Husain.

This year's Conference is sponsored by Karachi Youth Initiative, the Pakistan Arts Council, the American Institute of Pakistan Studies, Avari Hotels and FM 107.