

SOUTH ASIAN UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
(FSS) & INSTITUTE OF SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES

IN COLLABORATION WITH
FRIEDRICH-EBERT-STIFTUNG INDIA

GENDERLOGUES

GENDERED SPACES

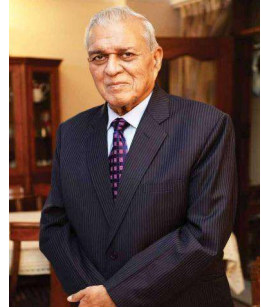
A DIALOGUE WITH WOMEN
IN DIPLOMACY AND MEDIA

DATE	VENUE	TIME
10 OCTOBER, 2024	LS001	10.00 AM - 4:00 PM

Inaugural Panel 10:30 – 11:00 AM

Professor K.K. Aggarwal

President, South Asian University



Prof. K. K. Aggarwal is an Engineer by training and has been an accomplished academician and administrator. He received his PhD in Reliability Evaluation and Optimization from Kurukshetra University, Haryana. He pursued his Master's Degree from the same university securing first position. He obtained his Bachelor's Degree in Electronics and Communication Engineering from Panjab University, Chandigarh as the topper.

Prof. Aggarwal has served the National Board of Accreditation, India, as its former Chairman. He was the Founding Vice Chancellor of Guru Govind Singh Indraprastha University, Delhi, where he served for ten years from 1998 to 2008, leading from the front. Before this, he was the Pro Vice-Chancellor of Guru Jambheshwar University, Hisar, for three years. He is also the former Chairman of the Board of Governors, MNIT, Jaipur.

He had a distinguished career of 27 years as an academic at the National Institute of Technology, Kurukshetra, where he was engaged in teaching and research activities in Computer Engineering and Information Technology. Prof. Aggarwal has authored various books including Reliability Engineering and Software Engineering, many of which have undergone numerous rounds of reprints. He has published over 400 research papers in the domain of Electronics and Computer Engineering in academic journals of repute, about half of which are international journals.

Apart from his contributions in the academic field, Prof. Aggarwal has made a very strong impact in the industrial world. The industry has widely consulted him, most notable being his contribution towards the Reliability Analysis for PSLV (Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle) of the Indian Space Mission. He has also delivered lectures and conducted programmes in several leading industrial organisations in India and overseas. He was declared as the Man of the Decade, Man of the Century and Man of the Millennium by American Bibliographical Institute, USA. He was also awarded the Delhi Ratan by the All India Conference of Intellectuals. International Biographical Centre, England published his biography in "The First Five Hundred – at the New Millennium" in July 2000.

Christoph P. Mohr

Country Director

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung India Office



Christoph P. Mohr currently serves as Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Country Director and Resident Representative to India. He holds a BA in Political Science and International Relations (Marburg University) and an MA in Governance and Public Policy (Darmstadt University of Technology and Sabanci University Istanbul). Prior to his role in India, he was working as for FES as Regional Director to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, as Associate Representative in Kenya and South Sudan as well as Policy Advisor in Germany.

Professor Sanjay Chaturvedi

Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences &
Director, Institute of South Asian Studies,
South Asian University



Prof. Sanjay Chaturvedi was Lala Lajpat Rai Chair Professor in Political Science at Panjab University, Chandigarh before joining South Asian University (SAU), New Delhi, as a Professor in International Relations in June 2018. He served as Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences (FSS) from September 2018 to September 2021. He is serving his second term as the Dean, FSS with effect from 1 August 2022.

During the early 1990s, he pursued post-doctoral research on ‘Polar Regions in International Relations’ at the University of Cambridge, England, with a Nehru Centenary British Commonwealth Fellowship. This was followed by the award of Leverhulme Research Grant at the University of Cambridge, where he was employed as a Research Associate to work on the research project, ‘The Future of the Antarctic Treaty System and its Relevance for the Arctic’, at Scott Polar Research Institute, from 1993 to 1995. A major output of his research stint at Cambridge, which also involved lecturing to M.Phil. in Polar Studies, was *The Polar Regions: A Political Geography* (Chichester: John Wiley, 1996), which remains widely cited.

Currently, he is the President of the Indian Ocean Research Group (IORG), an *Observer* in the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and Chief Editor of its flagship journal, *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region* (Routledge). He serves/has served on editorial boards of several journals including *Geopolitics* (Routledge); *Political Geography* (Elsevier), *Cooperation and Conflict* (Sage), *Journal of Borderland Studies* (Routledge), *Strategic Analysis* (Routledge), *The Polar Journal* (Routledge, as a Regional Editor) *India Quarterly: A Journal of International Affairs* (Sage), *Indian Foreign Affairs Journal: A Quarterly of the Association of Indian Diplomats* (Prints Publication), *Journal of Global Faultlines* (Pluto) and *Journal of Land Ports and Border Economy* (Sage).

Dr Shweta Singh

Associate Professor, Faculty of Social Science
South Asian University



Shweta Singh (she/her/hers) is Associate Professor of International Relations at the South Asian University (New Delhi, India). Her research broadly focuses on feminist international relations in South Asia, critical peace, and conflict studies with a particular focus on post-colonial South Asia, the politics of ‘everyday’, norms and WPS agenda (South Asia), gender and populism, and contemporary politics of Afghanistan, Kashmir and Sri Lanka. Before joining SAU, she taught for nearly a decade at Lady Shri Ram College, University of Delhi, and was a visiting fellow, at University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand. She is currently the International Studies Association Program Co- Chair (2023-2024), and has also served as member on the ISA Committee on the Status of Engagement with the Global South Members (2020-2024).

Shweta has been the recipient of the prestigious United States Leadership Award in 2010, and the Mahbub ul Haq Award in 2013. More recently, as the ISA program co-chair 2023-2024, she received the leadership recognition award at the Annual ISA Program Convention held in San Francisco USA. She has served as the UN Women International Expert on populism, nationalism, and gender (Regional Office for Asia and Pacific), and as Academic Advisor for the UNESCO-MGiEP project on State of Prevention of Violent Extremism through Education in South Asia. Shweta has led collaborative projects with UN Women, UNESCO-MGiEP, besides being part of various Track II Civil society networks for building bridges across borders in South Asia. She currently sits on the editorial boards of *International Studies Quarterly* and *Strategic Affairs*, and leads the collaborative project on *Feminist International Relations in South Asia: Past and Present*, with University of Dhaka.

Panel 1: Women in Diplomacy

Dr Meenakshi Gopinath

Director, WISCOMP & Life Trustee, IIC



Meenakshi Gopinath is currently Founder and Director of WISCOMP (Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace), an initiative that seeks to promote the leadership of South Asian women in the areas of peace, security and regional cooperation. She is also Chair, Board of Governors, Centre for Policy Research (CPR) and Principal Emerita of Lady Shri Ram College, New Delhi, where she served as Principal for 26 years from 1988-2014. She has been a member of the University Grants Commission (UGC), India.

Dr. Gopinath was the first woman to be nominated to the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) of India. She is a member of multi-track peace initiatives and people-to-people dialogues in South Asia. She has authored among others *Pakistan in Transition*, and co-authored *Conflict Resolution – Trends and Prospects*, *Transcending Conflict: A Resource book on Conflict Transformation* and *Dialogic Engagement* and has contributed chapters and articles in several books and journals on Gandhi, the politics of Pakistan, Conflict Resolution, Gender and Peace Building et al. Her interests include issues of human rights and gender, conflict transformation and Buddhist and Gandhian philosophy and the performing Arts. She also headed the Task Force of the SAKSHAM Report of the University Grants Commission that initiated several policy reforms on Gender Equity on Higher Education Institutes in India.

In recognition of her contribution to the field of women's education and empowerment, she has received several awards including the *Padma Shri Award*, *Indira Priyadarshini Gandhi Award*, the *Rajiv Gandhi Award for Excellence in Education* and the *Mahila Shiromani Award* and the *Delhi Citizen Forum Award* and *Qimpro Platinum Standard Award for Education* and *Celebrating Womanhood South Asian Recognition Award for Social Harmony* and *International Lifetime Achievement Award – 2009 for outstanding work in the field of justice, Equity, Peace and Progress*.

Ambassador Lakshmi Puri

Former UN Assistant Secretary General
Deputy Executive Director UN Women



Ambassador Lakshmi Puri was the youngest entrant into the Indian Foreign Service. After representing India abroad in key bilateral and multilateral diplomatic assignments for 28 years, including as Ambassador to Hungary and Bosnia Herzegovina, she served at the United Nations for 15 years in various leadership capacities: as Director of the flagship International Trade Division of UNCTAD, later as Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations, and as the founding Deputy Executive Director of UNWOMEN. She thus contributed to the UN's major projects on peace and security, sustainable development, climate change, human rights, and humanitarian action.

She is a recipient of the prestigious Eleanor Roosevelt Prize for Human Rights, among others. She is a Distinguished Fellow of the Indian Association of International Studies (IAIS) and a visiting professor at the South Asian University, New Delhi.

Ambassador Lakshmi Puri is the author of a novel "Swallowing the Sun" which has won universal critical acclaim and become a National Bestseller.

Ambassador Ruchi Ghanashyam

Former High Commissioner of India to UK,
Former Secretary (West) Ministry of External Affairs



Ruchi Ghanashyam joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1982. During her career of 38 years, she worked as Under Secretary (XAV), Director (Pakistan), Joint/Additional Secretary (Europe West) and Secretary (West) in the Ministry of External Affairs. Outside India, she served in the Indian Embassies in Damascus, Kathmandu, Brussels, Islamabad, and New York, and as India's High Commissioner to Ghana, South Africa, and the UK, where she retired in 2020.

Post retirement, she has written newspaper columns, articles and chapters for newspapers and books, and given talks/spoken in seminars/panel discussions on subjects including India's foreign policy to students in India and the UK as well as at think tanks. She is a Member of the Board of Patrons of the India Centre for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development, Southampton University, UK and Adjunct Faculty, Centre for European Studies, Manipal University. She is also involved in social work.

Her book, *An Indian Woman in Islamabad (1997-2000)* has recently been published and is now available in the market.

She is married to A.R. Ghanashyam, who joined the IFS in 1982 and retired as India's High Commissioner to Nigeria. She has two sons, one of whom is an entrepreneur while the other is an environmental scientist.

Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj

Former Permanent Representative/Ambassador
of India to the United Nations



Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj, a trailblazer in the Indian Foreign Service, has had a distinguished career marked by numerous pioneering achievements. As the top performer in the 1987 batch of the Indian Foreign Service and the all-India women's topper of the 1987 Civil Services batch, she has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership and diplomatic acumen.

Notably, Ambassador Kamboj served as the first female Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations in New York until May 2024, leading various initiatives and representing India's interests with distinction. Her tenure was highlighted by a historic milestone: becoming the first woman from India to preside over the United Nations Security Council in December 2022. Throughout her illustrious career, Ambassador Kamboj has broken new ground, serving as the first female Ambassador of India to Bhutan, a country crucial to India's foreign policy in the region. As High Commissioner to South Africa, she significantly strengthened relations with a key gateway to the African continent. Her tenure as Ambassador/Permanent Representative to UNESCO in Paris was marked by landmark achievements aligned with the agency's mandate.

Between 2011 and 2014, Ambassador Kamboj made history again as India's first female Chief of Protocol, playing a pivotal role in orchestrating high-level diplomatic engagements that substantially elevated India's global standing. Her early career included postings in Paris, Mauritius, New York, and Cape Town. Additionally, she was seconded to the Commonwealth Secretariat in London from 2009-2011 as an international civil servant, serving as a staff officer to the Commonwealth Secretary-General.

Panel 2: Women in Media

Professor Saima Saeed

Professor, Centre for Culture Media & Governance

Jamia Millia Islamia



Professor Saima Saeed has a diverse work experience spanning across media industry, media teaching and research. An alumnus of AJK Mass Communication Research Centre, Jamia Millia Islamia and Lady Shri Ram College for Women, University of Delhi, she completed her doctoral studies from the Department of Social Work, Jamia Millia Islamia on the role of television in ushering in, catalyzing and sustaining social development.

Prof Saeed joined the Centre for Culture, Media and Governance, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi in 2007 as part of its founding team and has been with it ever since. Prior to this, she has worked as a media/news professional and has been associated with some leading news channels in India like NDTV 24X7 and Headlines Today, TV Today Group.

Published in well-known journals including Journalism Studies, Society and Culture in South Asia and Economic and Political Weekly, she is the author of Screening the Public Sphere: Media and Democracy in India, Routledge (2013) and co-editor of the volume, Pandemic, Event, and the Immanence of Life: Critical Reflections on Covid- 19, Routledge (2024). She has been Project Director of major research projects funded by government agencies and co-directed a GIAN project. She has served Jamia Millia Islamia in various capacities including as Media Coordinator and Foreign Students' Advisor of the University.

Nirupama Subramanian

Journalist, earlier at: The Indian Express
& The Hindu



Nirupama Subramanian is an independent journalist. She was foreign affairs and national security editor at The Indian Express from January 2022 to July 2023. Earlier at the same newspaper, she was national affairs editor, heading the Chandigarh and Mumbai editions successively.

Before moving to The Indian Express in 2015, Nirupama Subramanian was a foreign correspondent at The Hindu, posted successively to Sri Lanka and Pakistan. She is the author of a book on Sri Lanka, titled Sri Lanka: Voices from the War Zone, published by Penguin in 2005. Nirupama Subramanian has also worked at India Today, Sunday Observer, and Times of India.

She was a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University, a residential fellowship programme for journalists, and the recipient of the Prem Bhatia and Chameli Devi Jain awards for journalistic excellence. In May 2023, she was honoured as a Distinguished Alumna by her alma mater Delhi School of Economics.

She currently writes a column on foreign affairs at The Tribune, and contributes to Newslandry and Asia Sentinel.

Liz Mathew

Deputy Editor, The Indian Express



Liz Mathew is the Deputy Editor of The Indian Express. She writes on politics and policies at the national and state levels. After graduating in English Literature, she did a diploma in Journalism and Media Management. She also has a fellowship from Poynter Institute, Florida, where she learned to emphasize on factual and ethical reporting. She Started her career with the Malayalam newspaper, Deepika, one of the oldest newspapers in the country. In 1998, she shifted to English journalism as she joined the New Delhi bureau of the India Abroad weekly that used to be published from New York. She had contributed to the wire agency attached to it, The India Abroad News Service, which later became Indo Asian News Service (IANS), with which she had become a full-timer later. For a brief time, Liz had worked with a California based website, Newsroom which focussed on religion-based reports and contributed to Christian Science Monitor also. For a nine-month-period in 2004, she worked with Asian News International in its Subcon session – that contributed news to its international subscribers. In 2008, she joined Mint, the business publication of the Hindustan Times group and worked as the deputy chief of its political bureau till she joined The Indian Express in 2014.

In her 27 years of experience in political reporting and has covered national elections in 1996, 1998, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019 and the assembly elections in almost every state in India. She has also reported the 35th G8 Summit in L' Aquilla (Italy), President Pratibha Patil's five-nation tour, and covered multiple events in the US and Europe as well. In 2016, the Indian Express had her reports on the US elections. In July 2016, she was one of the six-member team that had interviewed Prime Minister Narendra Modi a day ahead of his major cabinet reshuffle. She has also interviewed senior cabinet ministers and chief ministers as well. Currently, she writes a fortnight column – Road To 2024 for the Indianexpress.com.

Smita Sharma

Journalist and Visiting Faculty

Kautilya School of Public Policy



Smita Sharma is an independent multimedia journalist with 21 years of experience across TV, digital and print newsrooms. She is a Visiting Faculty at Kautilya School of Public Policy. She has worked with leading Indian TV newsrooms DD News, IBN7/CNN-IBN, India Today/Aajtak, TV9 Bharatvarsh, ETV Bharat and India Ahead in the past in senior editorial roles leading their Foreign Policy coverage and anchoring prime time shows. She was Deputy Editor with one of India's oldest dailies, The Tribune. Her articles and analyses feature in leading publications including Deccan Herald, TOI+ and The Hindu. She also contributes to international news outlets including BBC World Services, TRT world, Voice of America and DW News.

She has penned chapters on Reporting on International Affairs and Risks of Digital Journalism for two edited volumes. She was nominated to the Edward R Murrow IVLP to US (2008), John Doherty Journalism Fellowship to Australia (2010) and Advanced Security Course at DKI-APCSS in Hawaii (2016).

She was a delegate at the inaugural Australia India Dialogue in 2011 and at the first Emerging Leaders' Dialogue under the AIYD banner held in Australia this year.

Gayatri Sharma

Program Advisor

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, India Office



Gayatri has an LL.M degree from the University of Warwick, UK, specialising in Gender, Law, and Development. She has worked for over 18 years primarily with NGOs, and her area of focus has been violence against women / children. She has conducted numerous trainings and workshops on the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 and on other laws concerning women and children. She is currently working with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung India as the Adviser on Gender and Social Justice.

