

# Harrison Akins

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## RESEARCH INTERESTS

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Intra-State Conflict, Terrorism, Counter-Terrorism/Counter-Insurgency, Minority Discrimination, Impact of Colonialism, Islamic Culture and Politics, South Asian Politics, U.S. Foreign Policy

## EDUCATION

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- 2019 PhD in Political Science (ABD), University of Tennessee—Knoxville  
Fields: International Relations, Comparative Politics, and Public Policy  
Dissertation: *The Terrorism Trap: The Hidden Impact of America's War on Terror*  
Committee: Krista Wiegand (Chair), Brandon Prins, Gary Uzonyi, Candace White
- 2018 Graduate Certificate in Global Security Studies, University of Tennessee—Knoxville
- 2010 MSc in Political Theory with Merit, London School of Economics
- 2009 MA in Liberal Arts (Great Books Program), St. John's College—Annapolis, MD
- 2006 BA in History Cum Laude with University Honors, American University

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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- 2016-Present Graduate Research Fellow, Global Security Program  
Howard H. Baker, Jr. Center for Public Policy, University of Tennessee—Knoxville
- 2015-Present Graduate Teaching Associate, Department of Political Science  
University of Tennessee—Knoxville
- 2013-2015 Program Coordinator, Ibn Khaldun Chair of Islamic Studies  
School of International Service, American University
- 2011-2015 Ibn Khaldun Chair Research Fellow  
School of International Service, American University
- 2010-2011 Policy Fellow, U.S. Nuclear Infrastructure Council, Washington, DC
- 2006-2007 Assistant Language Teacher, Japan Exchange & Teaching (JET) Program  
Hokkaido Board of Education, Wakkanai, Japan

## PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

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- 2019 "Violence on the Home Front: Interstate Rivalry and Pro-Government Militias," *Terrorism and Political Violence* DOI: 10.1080/09546553.2018.1548353
- 2018 "Mashar versus Kashar in Pakistan's FATA: Intra-Tribal Conflict and the Obstacles to Reform," *Asian Survey* 58(6): 1136-1159.
- 2018 "The 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force and America's Endless War," *Oxford Middle East Review* 2(1): 12-18.
- 2018 "The Two Faces of Democratization in Myanmar: A Case Study of the Rohingya and Burmese Nationalism," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 38(2): 229-245.

## POLICY BRIEFS & LONG-FORM ESSAYS

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"Testing Rationality in Foreign Policy: Donald Trump and the U.S.-Pakistani Relationship," in Sarah S. Aneel, ed. *Conflict and Cooperation in South Asia: Role of Major Powers* (Islamabad, Pakistan: Islamabad Policy Research Institute, 2019).

## Harrison Akins Curriculum Vitae

“The Two Faces of Portugal,” *Los Angeles Review of Books*, November 10, 2018.

*Indian Muslims in the Crosshairs: The BJP and Its Anti-Beef Crusade*, White Paper 8:18, Howard H. Baker, Jr. Center for Public Policy, September 2018.

*Between Allies and Enemies: Explaining the Volatility in the U.S.-Pakistan Relationship, 1947-2018*, Policy Brief 7:18, Howard H. Baker, Jr. Center for Public Policy, March 2018.

*FATA and the Frontier Crimes Regulation in Pakistan: The Enduring Legacy of British Colonialism*, Policy Brief 5:17, Howard H. Baker, Jr. Center for Public Policy, November 2017.

*China in Balochistan: CPEC and the Shifting Security Landscape of Pakistan*, Policy Brief 4:17, Howard H. Baker, Jr. Center for Public Policy, September 2017.

*The Yemen Imbroglia: Understanding the Many Layers of the Yemeni Civil War*, Policy Brief 3:17, Howard H. Baker, Jr. Center for Public Policy, April 2017.

“*Lawnmowers in the Sky*”: *The Turbulent Past and Uncertain Future of Drone Warfare*, Policy Brief 2:17, Howard H. Baker, Jr. Center for Public Policy, March 2017.

“U.S. Drone Tactics and Global Precedents in the Fight Against Terror,” SSN Policy Brief, *Scholars Strategy Network*, October 2016.

### **WORKING PAPERS**

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“Tribal Militias and Political Legitimacy in British India and Pakistan” (Under Review)

“Delegating Repression: Pro-Government Militias and Domestic Terrorism” (Under Review)

“Elite Competition, Political Representation, and Ethnic Terrorism” (Under Review)

“Religion as Opposition: Militants’ Use of Islam in Pakistan”

“Rebel Ideology and Third-Party Support in Civil War,” With Eric Keels

“Voter Turnout and Communal Rioting in India”

### **HONORS & FELLOWSHIPS**

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William G. McCall Award for Dissertation Research, Department of Political Science, University of Tennessee—Knoxville (2018)

Thomas Dissertation Fellowship, University of Tennessee—Knoxville (2017-2018)

Critical Language Scholarship (Urdu), U.S. State Department (Lucknow, India; 2016 & 2017)

Chancellor’s Fellowship, University of Tennessee—Knoxville (2015-2019)

Graduate School Fellowship, University of Tennessee—Knoxville (2015-2016)

### **RESEARCH & PRODUCTION EXPERIENCE**

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Fieldwork- Pakistan (December 2018); Portugal (September 2018); India (Summer 2016 & 2017); UK, Ireland, Spain, Germany, Bosnia, Greece, Denmark, France, Italy (2013-2015)

Senior Researcher and Fieldwork Coordinator– Akbar Ahmed, *Journey into Europe: Islam, Immigration, and Identity* (Brookings Institution Press, 2018).

## Harrison Akins Curriculum Vitae

Associate Producer, Director of Cinematography, and Script Consultant – “Journey into Europe,” Produced and Directed by Akbar Ahmed. Stiftung Mercator Foundation and British Council USA, 2015. Documentary. Premiered ISNA Film Festival, Chicago, September 2015. Screened on PBS and N1 TV (Balkans). Added to the Ethnographic Film Library of the Royal Anthropological Institute, 2018.

Senior Researcher - Akbar Ahmed, *The Thistle and the Drone: How America's War on Terror Became a Global War On Tribal Islam* (Brookings Institution Press, 2013).

### LANGUAGE AND STATISTICS TRAINING

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Urdu– Intermediate-High Proficiency (08/2017 ACTFL OPI)

Hindi– Limited Working Proficiency

Statistics Programs- Stata, R, SPSS

### TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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*University of Tennessee—Knoxville:*

POLS-455 (Online): South Asian Politics (Instructor of Record); Fall 2018, Spring 2019

POLS-370: Contemporary Problems in International Relations: “The West and the World of Islam After 9/11” (Instructor of Record); Fall 2017, Spring 2018

POLS-249: Introduction to Comparative Politics (Instructor of Record); Fall 2016, Spring 2017

POLS-102: Introduction to Political Science (Discussion Section Leader); Fall 2015, Spring 2016

### MEDIA PUBLICATIONS

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“Coming face to face with Europe’s migration crisis,” *The Tennessean*, July 24, 2018. Republished in *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, July 25, 2018.

“Pakistan’s ‘Pashtun Spring’ faces off against a colonial-era law,” *South Asia @ LSE*, May 25, 2018.

“Pakistan getting tough love from US and China,” *East Asia Forum* (Australian National University), March 9, 2018.

“How Hindu Nationalists Politicized the Taj Mahal,” *The Atlantic*, November 27, 2017.

“Why are the Rohingya Muslims Being Persecuted in Myanmar?,” *India Times*, September 9, 2017.

“Symbols of Confederacy not part of my heritage,” *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, August 31, 2017.

“Going inside the two worlds of European Muslims,” *The Tennessean*, August 8, 2017.

“Donald Trump and ISIS: How They Look Like Two Sides of the Same Coin,” *India Times*, July 26, 2017.

“What Christianity and Islam have in common,” *The Tennessean*, April 24, 2017. Republished in *The Memphis Commercial Appeal*, April 30, 2017.

“Trump’s Islam-Focused Policies Are An Example of How Not To Fight Terrorism,” *The Huffington Post*, February 1, 2017.

“Authoritarianism, Nationalism, & Twitter Sum Up The Toxic Week One Under A Trump Presidency,” *India Times*, January 31, 2017.

## Harrison Akins Curriculum Vitae

“India’s Model of Tolerance,” *BBC*, December 8, 2016. Republished in *BBC Arabic*, December 26, 2016; *BBC Chinese*, January 4, 2017; *BBC Indonesian*, January 22, 2017.

“Why a Trump Presidency Will be Damaging to the US-India Relationship,” *India Times*, November 7, 2016.

“Trump and Hindu Nationalism: America’s Modi,” *The Huffington Post*, October 31, 2016.

“Cutting the study of Islam a mistake,” *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, October 2, 2016.

“Why the Appointment of Kofi Annan to Myanmar’s Advisory Commission on Rakhine State is Important,” *The Huffington Post*, September 1, 2016.

“Drones and the Burden of Proof: The release of the White House’s guidelines on the use of drones,” *The Huffington Post*, August 8, 2016.

“The Rohingya Are Suu Kyi’s Litmus Test for a Legitimate Democracy,” *The Huffington Post*, November 9, 2015. Republished in *Huffington Post Korea*, November 10, 2015.

“To Combat the ‘New Anti-Semitism,’ Europe’s Jews and Muslims Must Work Together,” *The Huffington Post*, April 22, 2015.

“Islam and Dialogue in Northern Ireland,” *The American Muslim*, June 6, 2014.

“A Tennessean in the House of Lords,” *Pakistan Today*, May 31, 2014.

“No Place for Islam?: Buddhist Nationalism in Myanmar,” *Al Jazeera English*, October 18, 2013.

“Mental illness, Islam or revenge?: Understanding terrorism from the Navy Yard to Pakistan to Kenya” (with Akbar Ahmed), *Washington Post*, September 24, 2013.

“Drones or No Drones, The Violence Will Continue in Pakistan,” *LSE Ideas*, August 20, 2013.

“Yes, ‘An Unflattering Truth’,” *Dawn (Pakistan)*, July 10, 2013.

“The spectre of fascism in Greece” (with Akbar Ahmed), *Al Jazeera English*, July 9, 2013.

“US should replace drone strikes in Pakistan with outreach to tribal areas” (with Akbar Ahmed), *Christian Science Monitor*, May 30, 2013.

“Mr. Sein Goes to Washington” (with Akbar Ahmed), *Washington Post*, May 21, 2013.

“Global War Gone Wrong: A Response,” *American Diplomacy*, May 2013.

“Making Enemies in Yemen” (with Akbar Ahmed), *Al Jazeera English*, May 5, 2013.

“Suu Kyi’s Muslim moral dilemma” (with Akbar Ahmed), *Asia Times Online*, April 23, 2013.

“Waziristan: ‘The Most Dangerous Place in the World’” (with Akbar Ahmed), *Al Jazeera English*, April 12, 2013.

## Harrison Akins Curriculum Vitae

“We must understand source of violence to win war on terror,” *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, March 24, 2013. Republished in *The Tennessean*, April 2, 2013.

“Wayward in Waziristan” (with Akbar Ahmed), *Foreign Policy*, March 15, 2013.

“Aung San Suu Kyi, the Rohingya of Burma and the Challenge of Faith” (with Akbar Ahmed), *Brookings Institution*, October 24, 2012.

“Eritrea and its Refugee Crisis” (with Akbar Ahmed), *Al Jazeera English*, October 17, 2012.

“The Plight of the Rif: Morocco’s Restive Northern Periphery” (with Akbar Ahmed), *Al Jazeera English*, September 28, 2012.

“Nigeria in Flames: Breaking the Cycle of Revenge” (with Akbar Ahmed), *Al Jazeera English*, September 9, 2012.

“The Aceh Elections and the Fragility of Peace” (with Akbar Ahmed), *Al Jazeera English*, April 9, 2012.

“Beyond Dialogue: An Unprecedented Jewish-Muslim Gathering at the Holocaust Museum,” *The American Muslim*, March 30, 2012.

“Waiting for the Arab Spring in Western Sahara” (with Akbar Ahmed), *Al Jazeera English*, March 14, 2012.

“Restoring Harmony Between Bangkok and the Malay Muslims of South Thailand” (with Akbar Ahmed), *Al Jazeera English*, February 27, 2012.

“No Arab Spring for Egypt’s Bedouin” (with Akbar Ahmed), *Al Jazeera English*, February 15, 2012.

“The Rohingya: Myanmar’s Outcasts” (with Akbar Ahmed), *Al Jazeera English*, January 30, 2012.

“Little Help for the Persecuted Rohingya of Burma” (with Akbar Ahmed), *The Guardian* (UK), December 1, 2011.

### **CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION & PUBLIC LECTURES**

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“The Terrorism Trap: The Shifting Priorities of U.S. Counterterrorism Policy,” Invited Lecture, Islamabad Policy Research Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan, December 14, 2018.

“The Geo-Politics of South Asia and U.S. Interests,” Invited Presentation, Islamabad Policy Research Institute Annual International Conference, Islamabad, Pakistan, December 11-12, 2018.

“Understanding Islam Today,” Public lecture hosted by Episcopal Church of the Ascension, Knoxville, TN, April 19, 2018.

“Ethnic Nationalism and Minority Discrimination in Myanmar and Sri Lanka,” Paper presented at Midwest Political Science Association Annual Conference, Chicago, IL, April 5-8, 2018.

“Banning the Burqa: Political Ideology, Gender, and Islam in Europe” (with Allison Critcher), Paper presented at Midwest Political Science Association Annual Conference, Chicago, IL, April 5-8, 2018.

## Harrison Akins Curriculum Vitae

“The Strategic Use of Religion in Civil War,” Paper presented at the Global Security Research Workshop, Howard H. Baker Jr. Center for Public Policy, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN, February 14, 2018.

“Journey into Europe: A Documentary Film,” Invited Presentation, Christ’s Church of Georgetown, Washington, DC, May 15, 2017.

“Western Misconceptions about Islam,” Public lecture hosted by Farragut Presbyterian Church, Knoxville, TN, May 1, 2017.

“Opening the Black Box of Intra-Ethnic Conflict: Elite Power and Terrorism,” Paper presented at the Global Security Research Workshop, Howard H. Baker Jr. Center for Public Policy, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN, April 17, 2017.

“Opening the Black Box of Intra-Ethnic Conflict: Elite Power and Terrorism,” Paper presented at the Middle East Studies Faculty Research Seminar, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN, April 7, 2017.

“Journey into Europe: A Documentary Film,” Invited Presentation, Southeast Regional Middle East and Islamic Studies Seminar, Knoxville, TN, April 15-17, 2016.

Invited Discussant, Consultation on Religion in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States: A focus on the Rohingya in Myanmar and Bangladesh, Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs and the World Faiths Development Dialogue; Georgetown University, Washington, DC, December 16, 2013.

“The Tribal Roots of Terrorism,” Public lecture hosted by the Rotary Club of Oak Ridge, Oak Ridge, TN, April 25, 2013.

“U.S. and Muslim World Relations After 9/11,” Public lecture sponsored by the Institute for Nuclear Security and the International House, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN, April 24, 2013.

“U.S. and the Islamic World After 9/11- The Tribal Roots of Terror,” Public lecture sponsored by the Department of History, Maryville College, Maryville, TN, April 24, 2013.

Discussant, “Tribal Societies and the Modern State in the Muslim World,” Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World, Brookings Institution, Washington, DC, January 30, 2012.

### **SELECTED MEDIA APPEARANCES**

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Quoted in “‘Dear Friends’ Putin and Erdogan Make Joint Plans for Syria Following Trump Withdrawal Announcement,” *Newsweek*, January 24, 2019.

Interview on counterterrorism in Pakistan, “Air strikes and terror attacks examined: An interview with Harrison Akins,” *Action on Armed Violence*, January 22, 2019.

Quoted in “Sarah Huckabee Sanders says Putin isn’t happy about Syria decision, after he said he was, claims, ‘It puts them at greater risk,’” *Newsweek*, December 21, 2018.

Featured news story on IPRI lecture- “Pak-US relations: ‘American antiterrorism policies self-centered,’” *The Express Tribune* (Pakistan), December 15, 2018.

## Harrison Akins Curriculum Vitae

Featured news story on IPRI lecture- “US terrorism policies have increased anti-American sentiments among Muslims, American scholar says,” *Daily Times* (Pakistan), December 15, 2018.

Featured news story on IPRI lecture- “US needs to differentiate between ‘International Terrorism’ and ‘Domestic Terrorism’: US Research Scholar,” *Associated Press of Pakistan*, December 14, 2018.

Quoted in “Realm of non-traditional security: ‘South Asian countries face multiple common challenges,’” *The News* (Pakistan), December 13, 2018.

Quoted in “Till general elections in India, no peace overture likely to be considered: President AJK,” *Times of Islamabad* (Pakistan), December 13, 2018.

Quoted in “BRI offers common economic development for entire region,” *Pakistan Today*, December 12, 2018.

Interview on U.S.-Pakistani relations, *Daily Mail* Television, Islamabad, Pakistan, December 12, 2018.

Interview on U.S.-Pakistani relations, *92 News* Television, Islamabad, Pakistan, December 12, 2018.

Interview on U.S.-Pakistani relations, *DBTV* Television, Islamabad, Pakistan, December 11, 2018.

Live interview on Pakistan-India relations and the role of major powers, PTV World, *PTV Network* Television, Islamabad, Pakistan, December 11, 2018.

Quoted in “Russia, Iran, and Turkey Meet to Discuss Syria, Excluding the U.S.,” *Newsweek*, August 27, 2018.

Quoted in “Donald Trump says there’s ‘lots of progress in the Middle East’ as Syria’s ceasefire falls apart,” *Newsweek*, June 25, 2018.

Interview, “God and Government: Myanmar’s religious freedom crisis,” *Interfaith Voices*, *National Public Radio*, June 8, 2018.

Quoted in “Will war in Afghanistan end? Government announces Taliban ceasefire,” *Newsweek*, June 7, 2018.

Interview, “China-Pakistan Relations: Challenging US Global Leadership, Insights from Harrison Akins,” *The Diplomat*, May 30, 2018.

Quoted in “Is ISIS still around? Islamic State leader is alive and plotting a comeback, reports claim,” *Newsweek*, May 21, 2018.

Quoted in “Pakistan turns to China for high-end weapons,” *The Express Tribune* (Pakistan), April 19, 2018.

Quoted in “Pakistan reducing dependence on US arms,” *Dawn* (Pakistan), April 19, 2018.

Quoted in “Pakistan shuns US for Chinese high-tech weapons,” *Financial Times*, April 18, 2018.

Quoted in “Trump Slams Pakistan Companies With Sanctions Over Nuclear Technology Trading,” *Newsweek*, March 26, 2018.

## Harrison Akins Curriculum Vitae

Quoted in “Did Trump Fail to Put Pakistan on the Terror Finance Watch List?,” *Newsweek*, February 22, 2018.

Interview, “Hindutva’s latest on the Taj Mahal,” Radio National’s Religion and Ethics Report, *Australian Broadcasting Corporation*, February 14, 2018.

Quoted in “After Trump Funding Cut, Pakistan to Purchase More Weapons From Russia, China, and Eastern Europe,” *Newsweek*, February 1, 2018.

Quoted in “Pakistan says the US is no longer an ally—and it’s a much bigger deal than you think,” *The Express Tribune* (Pakistan), January 14, 2018.

Research cited in “Why is China Building a Military Base in Pakistan, America’s Newest Enemy?,” *Newsweek*, January 5, 2018.

Quoted in “Make America Less Safe Again: Will Trump Endanger U.S. Soldiers by Cutting Pakistan Funding?,” *Newsweek*, January 5, 2018.

Quoted in “Trump is Lying About Aid to Pakistan, Foreign Minister Says,” *Newsweek*, January 2, 2018.

Quoted in “Bin Laden’s Son Calls for Overthrow of Saudi Regime Following Trump’s Jerusalem Announcement,” *Newsweek*, December 11, 2017.

Quoted in “Dina Powell is Leaving. Is Trump’s National Security Team Falling Apart?,” *Newsweek*, December 8, 2017.

Quoted in “A Week Around the World,” *The Atlantic*, December 1, 2017.

Quoted in “Padmavathi Legendary Beauty vs. Today’s Hindutva Fury,” *The Island* (Sri Lanka), November 29, 2017.

Quoted in “President Trump Helps Terrorism in Afghanistan, Taliban Leader Says,” *Newsweek*, November 21, 2017.

Quoted in “Are Saudi Arabia and Iran about to go to war?,” *Newsweek*, October 30, 2017.

Interview on Muslims in Europe, *Issues of Faith*, News Channel 5 TV, Nashville, TN, October 18, 2017.

Featured news story- Amy Beth Miller, “Voyage to India: Maryville native Harrison Akins returns to India to study Urdu,” *Maryville Daily Times*, June 18, 2017.

Interview on Islam & Christianity, *Issues of Faith*, News Channel 5 TV, Nashville, TN, June 9, 2017.

Quoted in “Weekend Roundup: Victory in Myanmar for Democracy—On a Leash,” *Huffington Post*, November 13, 2015.

Quoted in “Weekend Roundup: ‘The Wretched of the Earth’ Are on the Move as Migrants,” *Huffington Post*, April 24, 2015.



## Harrison Akins Curriculum Vitae

Featured interview, *1864: The Circassian Genocide*, Produced and directed by Nart Shekim, Documentary. Chainmail Films & Zikh Studios, 2013.

Quoted in “US must replace drones with outreach to Tribal Areas,” *The Nation* (Pakistan), May 31, 2013.

Featured news story- J.J. Kindred, “Understanding terrorism: Islamic studies expert cites tribal code as key to violence,” *Maryville Daily Times*, April 25, 2013.

Featured segment and interview, “Islam researcher lectures about War on Terror at Maryville College,” WATE-TV Channel 6 News, Knoxville, TN, April 24, 2013.

Interview on drones and the war on terror, “The Steve Fast Show,” WJBC Radio, Bloomington, IL, April 7, 2013.

### PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP AND SERVICE

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American Political Science Association  
Midwest Political Science Association  
International Studies Association  
Scholars Strategy Network  
American Institute of Pakistan Studies

Reviewer- *Asian Survey, Terrorism and Political Violence*

### REFERENCES

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Ambassador Akbar Ahmed  
Ibn Khaldun Chair of Islamic Studies  
School of International Service  
American University  
[akbar@american.edu](mailto:akbar@american.edu)

Dr. Krista Wiegand  
Associate Professor of Political Science &  
Director, Global Security Program  
Howard H. Baker, Jr. Center for Public Policy  
University of Tennessee—Knoxville  
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Dr. Richard Pacelle  
Department Head  
Department of Political Science  
University of Tennessee—Knoxville  
[rpacelle@utk.edu](mailto:rpacelle@utk.edu)

Dr. Amineh Hoti  
Executive Director  
Center for Dialogue and Action  
Forman Christian College University  
Lahore, Pakistan  
[aminehhoti@fccollege.edu.pk](mailto:aminehhoti@fccollege.edu.pk)