

Digital Nation Summit Islamabad

Synopsis

Digitally Connected Pakistan: Innovation, Trust, and Resilience

Pakistan stands at a critical inflection point in its digital transformation journey. With over 200 million telecom subscribers, historic progress in closing the mobile gender gap, increased broadband access, and local device manufacturing, the country is making strides toward an inclusive digital economy. However, sustained progress requires strengthened trust, climate-resilient infrastructure, investor-friendly policies, and scalable innovation.

The GSMA Digital Nation Summit Islamabad will convene senior representatives from the Government of Pakistan, mobile operators, digital innovators, climate and finance experts, and international partners to advance collaboration for a thriving, secure, and inclusive digital Pakistan. The summit will explore transformative themes including “Trust by Design” through initiatives like Open Gateway, infrastructure resilience for climate adaptation, unlocking investment via tax and regulatory reforms, and innovation-driven impact for underserved communities.

Discussions will focus on:

- **Trust by Design:** How Open Gateway and API standardization can unlock secure, scalable digital ecosystems and public service innovation.
- **Enabling Investment:** Addressing tax reforms, regulatory modernization, and financial sustainability of the telecom sector.
- **Smart Infrastructure for Resilience:** Exploring the intersection of digital connectivity and climate preparedness to safeguard communities and ensure continuity.

Together, we aim to unlock a connected, equitable, and resilient digital future for Pakistan.

Event Agenda - Main Stage

08:30 – 10:35	Session 1: Building a Future-Ready Digital Pakistan
08:30 – 09:00	Registration
09:15 – 09:25	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Julian Gorman, Head of Asia Pacific, GSMA

09:25 – 10:05	<p>National Digital Transformation: Policy, Progress, and Cross-Sector Collaboration</p> <p><i>How is Pakistan advancing its Digital Nation vision? This session will explore the key policies, cross-sector collaborations, and investment initiatives driving the country's digital transformation. Panellists will discuss the critical enablers, persistent barriers, and the strategic actions needed to accelerate inclusive and sustainable progress.</i></p> <p>Moderator: Julian Gorman, Head of Asia Pacific, GSMA</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zarrar Khan, Secretary, MoIT • Aamir Ibrahim, CEO, Jazz • Khurram Ashfaq, CEO, Telenor • Sajjad Syed, Chairman, PASHA
10:05– 10:15	<p>Exclusive: The Regulator's Perspective: Building a Resilient Digital Ecosystem</p> <p><i>As Pakistan advances toward a more connected and inclusive digital future, the role of the regulator is central in shaping a secure, competitive, and investment-ready environment. In this session, the Chairman of PTA will outline key regulatory priorities—from spectrum roadmap to quality of service and digital trust—that are essential for enabling long-term resilience and innovation in the telecom and ICT sectors.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honorable Hafeez Ur Rehman, Chairman PTA
10:15 – 10:25	<p>Keynote by Guest of Honor: Fiscal Policy for a Sustainable Digital Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Bilal Azhar Kayani, Minister of State, Finance Ministry
10:25– 10:35	<p>Special Remarks by Chief Guest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Minister of IT & Telecom
Coffee Break	
11:00 – 12:50	<p>Session 2: Enabling a Sustainable Digital Economy: Trust and Investment</p> <p><i>This session will highlight two foundational pillars of Pakistan's digital future: strengthening trust in digital services and unlocking sustainable investment. It will explore how secure and scalable digital ecosystems underpinned by global API standards, cybersecurity, and seamless digital payments can foster confidence across the public and private</i></p>

	<p>sectors. The discussion will also reflect on how emerging technologies like 5G, and AI are accelerating digital transformation and why supportive fiscal policies, spectrum strategies, and regulatory clarity are critical to attract long-term investment and ensure sector sustainability for inclusive growth.</p>
11:00– 11:50	<p>Trust by Design – Building Confidence in the Digital Economy <i>Enabling secure and inclusive digital ecosystems through Open APIs, global standards, and robust cybersecurity. This session will spotlight the GSMA Open Gateway initiative as a catalyst for interoperability and innovation, and explore the importance of data governance, privacy safeguards, and responsible innovation to build user trust and unlock the full potential of digital services.</i></p> <p>Opening Keynote: <i>Laying the Foundations for Digital Trust</i></p> <p>Speaker: Raza Matin, Country Lead, Better Than Cash Alliance</p> <p>Fireside Chat: <i>From Cybersecurity to Digital Payments – Ensuring Trust in a Cashless Future</i></p> <p>Moderator: Sabahat Bokhari, Founder, The Inclusion Lab</p> <p>Panellist:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Murtaza Ali, President, JazzCash • Jahanzeb Khan, CEO, easypaisa <p>Panel Discussion: <i>Building Trust Across the Digital Ecosystem</i></p> <p>Moderator: Quratulain Chaudhary, VP Women Financial Inclusion, Mobilink Microfinance Bank</p> <p>Panellist:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambreen Iftikhar, Member, Federal Board of Revenue • Ajmal Anwar Awan, DG Digital Public Infrastructure, NADRA • Fahad Khan Niazi, Head of Public Policy & Government Relations, Emerging Markets, TikTok • Erikson Nazirwan, Country Manager Indonesia, Ipification
11:50 – 12:00	<p>Keynote: Innovation Enablers – 5G, AI, and Digital Infrastructure</p> <p><i>As digital transformation accelerates, technologies like 5G, AI, and digital infrastructure are becoming essential enablers of progress. This keynote explores how these foundational capabilities are helping organizations build more connected, intelligent, and resilient systems. By fostering trust, attracting investment, and supporting scalable innovation, they are laying the groundwork for sustainable growth in an increasingly digital world.</i></p> <p>Speaker: Fatima Asad Said, CEO, Abacus</p>

12:00 – 12:10	Powering Pakistan’s Digital Sovereignty: Cloud, Connectivity, and the Investment Imperative Speaker: Shoaib Aslam Syal, VP Global Data Business, Zeta Technologies
12:10-12:50	Panel: Unlocking Investment – Creating a Sustainable and Competitive Telecom Environment <i>Exploring the impact of taxation, spectrum policy, and regulatory reforms on digital investment and sustainability. The session will also highlight how emerging technologies such as 5G, AI, and cloud infrastructure can unlock new investment opportunities, drive efficiencies, and improve digital service delivery across sectors.</i> Moderator: Jeanette Whyte, Head of Public Policy APAC, GSMA Panellist: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naveed Khalid Butt, Group Chief Regulatory Officer Ufone & PTCL • Ahmed Bilal Masud, Deputy CEO, Huawei • Ehsan Yar Khan, DG Strategy & Development, PTA • Kiran Afzal, Senior Private Sector Specialist, The World Bank
Lunch Break	
14:00 – 15:00	Session 3: The Next Frontier - Expanding Access Through Future Connectivity <i>This session will explore the future of digital access in Pakistan, focusing on how diverse technologies such as 5G, non-terrestrial networks (NTNs), and emerging infrastructure models can help close the digital divide and improve resilience. Discussions will highlight the importance of forward-looking spectrum and policy frameworks to enable innovative, inclusive, and sustainable connectivity solutions.</i>
14:00 – 15:00	Future Connectivity – A balanced discussion on how a mix of technologies including NTNs, 5G, and other frontier models can extend digital access and strengthen resilience. The session will examine enabling policy and regulatory frameworks required to support this evolution. Opening Keynote: <i>Expanding Access with Non-Terrestrial Networks</i> Speaker: Aamir Ahsan Khan, President & CEO, Ericsson Pakistan Panel Discussion: <i>Enabling Frontier Connectivity – Policy and Regional Readiness</i> Moderator: Fatima Akhtar, VP Comms & Sustainability, Jazz Panellist: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gulalai Khan, Advisor, Adam Smith International

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jahanzeb Rahim, Member Telecom, MoITT • Ahsan Maykan, CMO, Telenor Pakistan • Atifa Asghar, Public Policy Consultant, Tencent Pakistan & Bangladesh
Coffee Break	
15:15 – 16:45	<p>Session 4: Inclusive Innovation for a Connected and Resilient Pakistan</p> <p><i>This session explores how inclusive technologies and collaborative models are closing Pakistan’s digital usage gap and building resilience. It will highlight progress in digital inclusion—especially for women and rural communities—and showcase how innovation, including AI, 5G, and mobile-enabled services, is supporting climate adaptation, public service delivery, and socioeconomic impact. The session will also touch on how data-driven insights can accelerate equitable access and outcomes.</i></p>
15:15– 16:00	<p>Expanding Access – From Coverage to Usage and Digital Equity Unpacking the mobile usage gap, with a focus on women, rural populations, and collaborative models to advance digital inclusion. This session will also explore how real-time, disaggregated data can inform more targeted and effective policy and programmatic interventions.</p> <p>Spotlight Presentation: <i>New GSMA Data on Pakistan’s Usage Gap & Gender Progress</i></p> <p>Panel Discussion: <i>Connecting the Unconnected – What Works in Closing the Usage Gap</i></p> <p>Moderator: Madeleine Askham, Advocacy Director for Digital Inclusion, GSMA</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kazim Mujtaba, President, Consumer Division at Jazz • Syeda Shafaq Karim, Director (Wireless Licensing), Pakistan Telecommunications Authority • Asif Jafri, CEO, Kistpay
16:00 – 16:45	<p>Innovation for Resilience – Climate, Public Services, and Local Impact This session will explore how digital innovation—built on inclusive design, scalable infrastructure, and public-private collaboration—is helping governments and communities strengthen resilience, improve service delivery, and address climate risks. From digital identity and interoperable platforms to early warning systems and smart agriculture, the discussion will highlight how policy, technology, and investment come together to drive impact where it’s needed most.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keynote: Digital Innovation for Resilience: A Systems Approach <i>A high-level overview of how digital platforms, data systems, and enabling policies can collectively strengthen resilience across sectors—from climate to health to agriculture.</i> <p>Speaker: Javaid Iqbal, Member, Special Technology Zones Authority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel: Scaling What Works: Policy, Platforms, and Partnerships <i>A moderated discussion featuring government, private sector, and multilateral voices on how to scale proven innovations through enabling regulation, investment, and cross-sector collaboration.</i> <p>Moderator: Bilal Qureshi, Director Innovation Fund, GSMA</p> <p>Panellist:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cynia, Head of Innovation, Telenor Khizer Khan, CEO, Bakhbar Kissan Azima Dhanjee, Co-Founder & CEO, ConnectHear Faisal Mehmood, Head of Digital Public Infrastructure Gates Foundation funded RAAST Project in Pakistan
16:45 – 17:00	Closing Reflections – Policy Pathways for a Digitally Empowered Pakistan A forward-looking wrap-up highlighting key enablers like spectrum, investment, inclusion, and innovation that can accelerate Pakistan's digital transformation.
17:00 – 18:00	Networking Cocktail