



**Call for Paper**  
**International Conference**



**on**

**Diaspora Governance in International Relations:  
Opportunities and Challenges for India**

**Organized by**

**Centre for Diaspora Studies,**

**Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar (India)**

**10-11 February 2020**

The increasing pace of globalization propelled by revolutionary transformation in communication and transportation technology is making settlement of people from one sovereign state to another easier and frequent. World Migration Report (2018) estimates that about 244 million people are living away from their country of birth that accounts roughly 3.3 per cent of the world's population. As crossing the territorial boundaries is a continuous phenomenon, history has witnessed different phases of such settlements- voluntary or forced. Millions of descendants of those settlers- 'having distinct identity carrying socio-cultural baggages of their motherland and even sometimes nostalgic to it with the sense of belongingness' have also attracted considerable attraction of academia and policy makers. There is an increasing trend among social scientists to study these communities under the rubric of Diaspora.

Diasporas have a unique role in international relations because they find themselves in between two countries sharing two cultures, having an emotional investment in two nations and preserving social connections in

two societies. They can be a bridge between homeland and host land in the areas of development, bilateral trade, humanitarian aid, cultural cooperation and advocacy for foreign policy issues. In the age of transnationalism, diasporas are seen as powerful non-state actors in international politics. Diaspora can influence world in various ways- passive and active, constructive and destructive; with the potential role of both peacemakers as well as peace wreckers. Since, classical theories of international relations were heavily tilted to state centric approach those were not paid attention on the role of diaspora in global politics. It became a part of analysis in 'World Systems Theory' and 'Dependency Approach'. Diaspora received due attention in the discussions of post-Cold War politics at the wake of ongoing debate on 'End of History', 'Clash of Civilization', 'Unipolarity Vs. Multipolarity', 'Global Village' and so on. The seed roped in 'Complex Interdependence Theory' brought 'Soft Power Dimensions' in international relations heavily reliant on diasporic communities. Nevertheless, diaspora has been seen as an important diplomatic device and those are used in terms of cultural and public diplomacy as well as track-II mode tools.

Diasporic communities together with influx of legal and illegal migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are increasingly seen as a part of 'Global Governance'. It is noteworthy to mention that the policy note of United Nations Organization on 'Global Governance and Global Rules for Development in the post-2015 Era' (2014) pays special attention on these communities. There are number of international conventions, multilateral and bilateral treaties as well as domestic laws within the sovereignty of nation-states. However, frequent changing nature of opportunities brought by diasporic communities as well as challenges posed by them, requires regular intervention of different stakeholders in terms of 'Good Governance'. This has led to the emergence of the idea of 'Diaspora Governance'.

In the context of migration and diaspora India is one of the leading powers. Estimates on Indian communities living abroad varies from 25 million to 30 million, but it is an established fact that it has the second largest diaspora in the world that is only next to Chinese Diaspora. Today, Indians have their presence in all corners of the world and it will not be an exaggeration to say that 'sun never sets in Indian Diaspora'. It is noteworthy to mention that

since a decade or so India mostly holds the topmost position in terms of remittances receipts from migrant communities. On the other hand, India is also one of the largest migrants receiving countries. People of African descent are living in India since centuries; Chinese invasion in Tibet led to large scale migration of Tibetans as refugees in India since late 1950s. There has been uninterrupted influx of migration from Nepal. Domestic problems in our neighbourhood have resulted in flood of refugees, asylum seekers and illegal migration in India.

India's relations with her Diaspora are deep rooted in history. The spread of Vedic/Hindu and Buddhist culture and philosophy in countries of South East Asia, Central Asia and other parts of the world are not only visible sign of glory of ancient India but also a symbol of India's cordial relations with her Diaspora. The colonial period witnessed large scale migration of Indians through inhuman practice of 'indentureship'. But Indian Diaspora never ignored their responsibility towards the motherland as well as to their land of destiny. It is not surprising that 'Congress' party were established in parts of Africa merely after fifteen years of its inception in India. Mahatma Gandhi led movements in South Africa with the close coordination with leaders of National Congress in India. Further, he returned to India to join Indian National Movement on the advice of legendary leader Shri Gopal Krishna Gokhale. In view of having close contact with overseas Indians, National Congress established an international cell in 1920. Indian Diaspora played active role in revolutionary movement in India, for years. 'London House' was a centre of those activities since 1905. Famous *Ghadar Movement* was launched by overseas Indians in North America and first interim government of revolutionaries was formed in Afghanistan in 1920s. Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose received unprecedented support of Indian communities based in South East Asia for *Azad Hind Fauj*.

In the initial years after independence of India, Indian government was not so proactive to engage with her Diaspora at official level. First Prime Minister of India Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru advised overseas Indians not to look towards India to resolve their issues and to 'assimilate with the land of their destiny'. Later, Indira Gandhi branded Indian Diaspora as 'Cultural Ambassador of India' but not paid much attention on the problems faced by them in their countries of adoption. Towards late 1980s India began

dialogue with her Diaspora mostly in USA through Global Organization for People of Indian Origin (GOPIO). Realizing economic potential of Indian Diaspora, Indian government tried to trap them to deal with 'Balance of Payment Crisis' in 1991 and launched 'Resurgent India Bonds' aftermath of economic sanctions due to nuclear tests in 1998. Subsequently, High Level Committee on Indian Diaspora was constituted in 2000 to study and prepare a detailed profile of Indian Diaspora living across the globe. Thus, beginning of twenty-first century coincided with the active phase of Diasporic engagement. Now, India is carrying a range of activities to promote cordial relations with her Diaspora. Yet, there has been criticism to Indian approach to deal with her Diaspora. It is argued that Indian policy is aimed to economic benefits and largely focused on 'Global North'; and socio-cultural factors and issues of Diaspora based in 'Global South' are often ignored. Further, identification of ways and means to promote sustainability of engagements and mutual interest is also need of the hour which is essential for Indian aspiration of reviving her status of *Vishwa Guru* and play the role of 'Global Power' in world politics.

At this backdrop, Centre for Diaspora Studies, Central University of Gujarat organizes a Two-day International Conference on "Diaspora Governance in International Relations: Opportunities and Challenges for India" during 10-11 February 2020. The conference will bring together scholars from varied arenas- academics, policy makers, civil society and researchers from India and abroad. The conference intends to scrutinize Diaspora Governance in International Relations with Indian perspectives.

### Outcome

This conference anticipates to provide a theoretical understanding of Diaspora Governance in International Relations with special focus on Indian perspective. The conference will provide a knowledge platform for scholars working in policy and academic domain to share ideas pertaining to Diasporic engagement in past, present as well as to evolve future strategies. The conference will generate a detailed report including suggestions and policy recommendations for the benefit of different stakeholders. Selected papers of the conference will be published in a book form by an international/ national publisher after blind peer review.

## Major Sub-themes

The followings are the major themes of the Conference. However, all the related issues are also welcome.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diaspora Governance</li> <li>• Diaspora in Global Politics</li> <li>• Diaspora and International Relations</li> <li>• Ancient Indian Thought on Diaspora</li> <li>• Diaspora and Nation-Building</li> <li>• Diaspora and National Movement</li> <li>• Diaspora and Globalization</li> <li>• Diaspora and Soft Power</li> <li>• Diaspora and Ethnic Conflicts</li> <li>• Diaspora and International Economy</li> <li>• Diaspora and its Engagement with Hostland</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diaspora and Foreign Policy</li> <li>• Diaspora and Diplomacy</li> <li>• Diaspora and Immigration Policies</li> <li>• Diaspora and Geopolitics</li> <li>• Diaspora and Security</li> <li>• Diaspora and Remittances</li> <li>• Diaspora and Philanthropy</li> <li>• Diaspora, Citizenship and Sovereignty</li> <li>• Diaspora and International Borders</li> <li>• Diaspora and Transnationalism</li> <li>• Challenges of Governance: Illegal Immigrants, Refugees, Asylum Seekers etc.</li> </ul>
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## Languages

English Hindi Gujarati

## Guidelines for Submission of Abstracts

- All participants are required to submit an abstract about 250-300 words in .doc/x formats.

- Format: 1-inch margin, 1.5 line spacing, Times New Roman/Mangal, 12 fonts
- File name: YOUR NAME and INSTITUTION
- The document must contain; a) name of author(s), b) affiliation as you would like it to appear in programme, c) email address, d) Abstract e) up to 10 keywords.

All abstracts will be peer reviewed and selected papers will be invited for final paper presentation. Please use plain text (Times Roman 12) and abstain from using footnotes and any special formatting, characters or emphasis (such as bold, italics or underline). If you do not receive a reply till 15 November 2019, please send a query.

Abstracts or requests for further information or any query should be sent to: [cugdiasporaconference2020@gmail.com](mailto:cugdiasporaconference2020@gmail.com)

## Registration Fees\*

Academician / Professional / Faculty Member (Indian and Overseas Indians)	₹ 1,500/- (INR)
Research Scholar/Student (Indian and Overseas Indians)	₹ 750/- (INR)
Academician / Professional / Faculty Member (Foreign Nationals)	\$ 30 (USD)
Research Scholar/Student (Foreign Nationals)	\$ 15 (USD)

\*The registration fee will cover conference kit and food served in the venue. Organizers will try to provide modest accommodation, subject to availability of fund.

## Important Dates

Last date for receiving abstract	<b>10 November 2019</b>
Communicating about selection	<b>15 November 2019</b>
Last date for receiving full paper	<b>30 January 2020</b>
Date of Conference	<b>10-11 February 2020</b>

### About the University

The Central University of Gujarat was established through an Act of Parliament in the year 2009. It has jurisdiction over the entire state of Gujarat. It renders human services to a cause of higher education by catering to the academic, intellectual and professional needs of youths in the state of Gujarat and across the country. To this extent, it contributes its strength in generating and providing requisite human resources that India needs to emerge as a vibrant knowledge society. The mission of the CUG is to provide access to quality education and create opportunities to encourage students to effectively engage with emerging innovations and technological challenges, international competitiveness and leadership in thought as well as in action. The CUG is also conscious of importance of developing entrepreneurial and scholastic abilities for creation of knowledge, wealth and prosperity for the country as well as peace and happiness for the human race.

The Central University of Gujarat presently has ten schools and two independent centres. There are sixteen centres operating within the schools. They cover multidisciplinary subjects ranging from Languages, Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences. Currently, the university offers three integrated Master's programmes, fourteen stand-alone Master's programmes and thirteen M.Phil - Ph.D integrated programmes. Some schools also offer admissions directly to Ph.D. The university makes concerted efforts to enhance its excellence in teaching, research and extension activities.

### About Centre for Diaspora Studies

The Centre for Diaspora Studies (CDS) was established in 2011. The CDS is an independent centre in the University and offers M.Phil. / Ph.D. Programmes with the interdisciplinary approach. With its multidisciplinary framework, it conducts study of various aspects and issues of migration and

diaspora and their cultural, literary, social, demographic, political and economic impacts both on the home country and on the host countries with focus on the Indian diaspora. The centre provides an excellent academic environment with a focus on participatory teaching and learning with use of ICT in teaching. The CDS is continuously engaged in exploration of new research areas through field surveys, policy investigations and academic discourses. Besides having regular talks and distinguished lectures, the CDS organizes International Conference annually.

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