Independent Think Tanks: Challenges in Shrinking Spaces

History of think tanks (TT) can be traced back to the 19th Century, but they received major impetus at end of the 20th Century, and since then, their role has enhanced in policy debate and formulation many folds. There are different types of think tanks including government, cooperate and independent ones. Independent think tanks became glorified due to the nature of their work and freedom from influence. However, in recent times, a debate has started about the ‘independence’ of think tanks, whether they are really independent or is it merely a myth, especially in the context of funding and donor driven programme implementation since TTs cannot survive without funding from donors. This panel will try to answer the following questions:

1. How we can define an ‘independent’ think tank?
2. How can the role of donors be minimised to ensure independence?
3. How can TTs benefit from the concept of Social Entrepreneurship to ensure independence?

Panel Organisers:
Mr Shakeel Ahmad Ramay, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan
Email address: sramay@sdpi.org

Mr Irfan Chatha, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan
Email address: irfan@sdpi.org