

Date of Meeting:	26 th May 2026	Meeting Room:	
Venue:	Zoom		
Meeting Recording Link:			
Start Time:	9:30 PM	Finishing Time:	11:00 PM
Minutes Recorded by:	Ayman Mughal	Status	Draft

Attendance at Meeting		
NAME	POSITION	VIA
Mr. Sajjad Mustafa Syed	Chairman	Zoom
Mr. Umair Nizam	SVC	Zoom
Mr. Abdul Wahab	Member CEC	Zoom
Mr. Mohammad Munaf	Member CEC	Zoom
Mr. Salman Dar	Member CEC	Zoom
Dr. Sonia Saleem	Member CEC	Zoom
Mr. Usman Akbar	Member CEC	Zoom
Sheikh Abdul Qadir	Member CEC	Zoom
Ms. Nadia Iqbal	Member CEC	Zoom
Mr. Hassan Bin Rizwan	Member CEC	Zoom
Mr. Zohaib Khan	Former Chairman	Zoom
Dr. Shoab Khan (Co-opted)	Former Chairman	Zoom
Mr. Ali Hasani	Secretary General	Zoom
Ms. Filza Maniar	Secretariat	Zoom
Ms. Ayman Mughal	Secretariat	Zoom

Meeting Agenda
1. ASOCIO Digital Summit 2026

Committee Name	Central Executive Committee	 PAKISTAN IT INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
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The meeting started with recitation of the Holy Quran.

- It was briefed to the CEC on background of ASOCIO Digital Summit which is broadly comparable in format to the APICTA Summit and includes digital awards, AI summits, plenary meetings, and policy forums. By scale. ASOCIO as an organization is a significantly larger organization than APICTA organization. APICTA’s annual operational budget is approximately USD 100,000, whereas ASOCIO’s annual budget stands at approximately USD 320,000.
- P@SHA has maintained membership of ASOCIO for several years, with participation having been relatively dormant for a period before being revived under the current leadership.
- P@SHA formally expressed interest in hosting the ASOCIO Digital Summit 2026 and received a draft hosting agreement from the ASOCIO Secretariat. Based on the initial terms of that agreement, P@SHA prepared and submitted a formal hosting pitch, which was presented to the ASOCIO Board on 10th November 2025 in Taipei during Digital Summit 2025.
- The ASOCIO Board voted in favor of Pakistan’s bid, confirming P@SHA as the host for the upcoming ASOCIO Digital Summit. A binding hosting contract was subsequently negotiated and executed. During the negotiation process, certain terms in the revised contract differed materially from those in the original agreement circulated at the time of the pitch, notably provisions relating to business-class international travel for ASOCIO officials.
- P@SHA was unable to accommodate the business-class travel demands, as this would have been in direct contravention of the Government of Pakistan’s prevailing austerity directives and audit requirements. Under current policy, even senior Federal Ministers are not permitted to travel business class at public expense. Compliance with the travel provisions would have created an untenable audit objection for P@SHA, given that its funding line-item is subject to audit by the relevant government bodies.
- An alternative arrangement was agreed upon, whereby privately raised contributions, separate from government funding would be utilized to cover the business-class travel costs for a limited number of ASOCIO officials, thereby ensuring the government-funded component remained audit-complaint. The event was planned for November 2026, with a budget target more than USD 500,000, significantly larger than the minimum required by ASOCIO, reflecting P@SHA’s ambition to host a landmark event. Preliminary commitments of funding support have been received from relevant government bodies, including the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) and the relevant Ministries.
- The CEC was informed that notwithstanding the executed contract, serious complications had emerged over the preceding three to four weeks. P@SHA was informally notified that several ASOCIO member economies had expressed reservations about attending a summit hosted in Pakistan, citing the prevailing geopolitical and security climate as their primary concern.
- It was reassured to the member economies and solicit attendance commitments yielded limited results. Time-zone differences, competing travel schedules of potential attendees, and other operational factors contributed to insufficient outreach.
- ASOCIO Board meeting was attended by the CEC members convened by the ASOCIO Chairman, at which the Pakistan hosting arrangement was placed under review. The concern was expressed that the conduct of the meeting departed from standard governance practice: the revocation of hosting rights was not included as a formal agenda item; the vote was conducted informally, and the Pakistan delegations was given only 5-7 minutes to address the Board.
- The final vote of the ASOCIO Board was against Pakistan retaining hosting rights, with only one economy, Bangladesh, reportedly voting in Pakistan’s favor. The Chairman attributed this outcome, in large part, to active lobbying against Pakistan’s hosting by the ASOCIO Chairman, and to P@SHA’s failure to conduct sufficient counter-lobbying between the award of hosting rights and the vote.
- The CEC was further advised that an ASOCIO AI Summit, originally scheduled for April and subsequently moved to September/October due to the geopolitical situation in Indonesia, may also be under review for relocation.

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- CEC Member shared his observations that the result of the vote was deeply disappointing and, to a significant degree, unexpected. The scale of the vote against Pakistan with only one economy in support indicated a more profound level of negative perception among member economies than had been anticipated.
- It was acknowledged that P@SHA had placed excessive reliance on verbal assurances of support from certain economies, and that formal, documented commitments had not been secured. The absence of concrete written commitments had been cited by ASOCIO officials as a basis for uncertainty about Pakistan’s preparedness.
- He underscored the need for P@SHA to consider its responsibilities to its internal stakeholders, in particular the member companies that had already submitted nominations for the ASOCIO Awards (reportedly 32 at the time of the meeting), and the government bodies that had been engaged and had provided preliminary expression of support. He also cautioned against any extreme response, such as immediate resignation from ASOCIO, and advocated instead for a measured, face-saving exit strategy that preserves Pakistan’s standing within the organization.
- It was stressed that a responsible communication strategy would be required to manage the expectations of both the private sector nominees and the relevant government stakeholders.
- The importance of personal relationships with ASOCIO Board members was shared, noting that P@SHA had not adequately cultivated these relationships, particularly in the period between winning the hosting vote and the revocation meeting.
- It was noted that the ASOCIO Chairman appeared to have actively orchestrated the vote against Pakistan, citing personal grievances arising from the contract negotiations particularly the business-class travel issue. He voted strongly against P@SHA withdrawing its ASOCIO membership and acknowledged that P@SHA’s engagement with member economies following the initial hosting win had been insufficient, and that this had contributed to the adverse outcome.
- It was also recommended against P@SHA withdrawing from ASOCIO, as this would appear as an abandonment of the situations rather than a principled stand. He suggested that, if the hosting arrangement could not be salvaged for the current year, P@SHA should seek to defer the event to the following year on P@SHA’s own terms, rather than accepting a permanent relinquishment. He highlighted the escalating cost of international travel as an additional structural factor that had discouraged attendance commitments from some economies.
- The Committee recommended that the matter be placed in the hands of a few CEC members, who possessed the requisite relationships and familiarity with ASOCIO stakeholders to negotiate effectively.
- It was also advised against P@SHA sending a formal letter at this stage, preferring instead that informal conversations be held with the ASOCIO Chairman and key Board members in the first instance, after which the appropriate course of actions could be determined. Noted that the formal letter, if required, should be prepared and held in readiness, but not dispatched until the outcome of the informal outreach was known.
- Noted that ASOCIO remained a reputationally valuable forum for P@SHA and for Pakistan’s IT sector, and that maintaining membership and good standing was in the long-term interest of the organization.
- CEC Members expressed the view that a walkout from the earlier ASOCIO Board meeting would not have been appropriate, and that such an action would have irreparably damaged the relationship. He supported the position that P@SHA should not consider withdrawal from ASOCIO at this time.
- It was acknowledged and accepted personal responsibility for the shortcoming in outreach and engagement following the awards of hosting rights, noting the impact of time-zone differences and personal commitments during the relevant period.

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- He emphasized that the only substantive contractual point of difference between P@SHA and ASOCIO, one that had not been resolved prior to the revocation, was the matter of business-class international travel for ASOCIO officials. All other contractual revisions had been accepted by P@SHA. The travel provision could not, under any circumstances, be funded through government channels without incurring an audit objection.
- He expressed concern that the conduct of the ASOCIO Board meeting, including the absence of a formal agenda item, the manner of voting, and the orchestrated nature of the proceedings, reflected a degree of bad faith on the part of the ASOCIO leadership.
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- He mentioned two options available to P@SHA: 1) Accept the outcome and allow the event to proceed in Indonesia without contest, maintaining membership of ASOCIO; or 2) Register a strong institutional protest, and pursue all available remedies under the contract. He characterized the latter as consistent with the current national emphasis on self-respect and institutional assertiveness.
- He cautioned the CEC, however, that any future commitments regarding hosting in 2026/2027 would need to be transparently communicated as subject to the approval of the incoming CEC, since the current CEC had no mandate to commit the organizations beyond its own term, and no confirmed government funding existed for future years.
- He endorsed the CEC’s consensus position of pursuing informal outreach in the first instance, while simultaneously preparing a formal letter for dispatch if required.

Action Items:

1. The CEC immediately initiate informal personal contact with the ASOCIO Chairman, with the objectives of registering P@SHA’s deep disappointment and institutional displeasure; and exploring the feasibility of deferring the Pakistan-hosted ASOCIO Digital Summit to the year 2027 in lieu of outright cancellation.
2. Prepare draft formal letter to ASOCIO Secretariat or Board, setting out P@SHA’s position on the revocation, procedural concerns, and proposed path forward. Circulating draft to CEC for review.
3. The CEC unanimously agreed that P@SHA shall not, at this time, withdraw its membership of ASOCIO. This position may be reviewed by a future CEC according to the situation.
4. The CEC agreed that any formal commitment regarding Pakistan’s hosting of the ASOCIO Digital Summit in 2026/2027 shall be left to the discretion and mandate of the incoming CEC. The current CEC shall not make any binding financial or operational commitment on behalf of the organization for any event falling in or beyond the next financial year.
5. Manage communications with member companies that have submitted ASOCIO award nominations; provide clarity on event status.
6. Conduct internal debrief on the handling of the ASOCIO hosting process; identify lessons learned for future international engagements.