



World Sindhi Congress

ورلڊ سنڌي ڪانگريس

World Sindhi Congress®

Annual Report 2009
for the period from October 2008 to October 2009

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Campaigning at the United Nations for the cause of Sindh: Haleem Bhatti, Chairman and Suraiya Makhdoom, Senior Vice Chairperson.



Purpose of the organisation

World Sindhi Congress (“WSC”) is a human rights advocacy organization based in the UK and USA. It aims to create a better understanding among the international community about the disadvantaged status of Sindhis in Pakistan and about Sindhi people’s struggles for their human rights, including the right to self-determination. In addition, WSC strives to create an association of Sindhis around the world. WSC is a registered company in England and Wales, UK and California, USA, organized to carry out non-profit activities only.

With limited resources but enormous commitment and a huge sense of responsibility, WSC has continued to work for the cause of Sindh and Sindhi people.

International campaigning for the cause

WSC is proud to be the only Sindhi organisation which has consistently represented the case of Sindhi people on the prestigious platforms of the United Nations for the last 21 years. In this connection, WSC has participated in all the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) sessions held in Geneva during this year:

- WSC submitted a written statement in the 10th session of UNHRC on the platform of Interfaith International, which has a special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It is available on the UNHRC website. This was the only statement, which dealt exclusively with the human rights in Sindh and Balochistan.

WSC was represented by Ms. Suraiya Makhdoom, the Senior Vice Chair. She attended the Council sessions as well as participated in NGO briefings. Ms. Makhdoom was one of the panellists in an Interfaith briefing, entitled UN Millennium Development Programme 2008, Pakistan and its Peripheries. She focussed upon the violation of human rights of Sindhi and Balouch people, including civil, political, economic, cultural and development rights.

- On 20 March 2009, Interfaith international with the collaboration of UNPO, Balouch Human Rights Council, World Sindhi Congress and Balouchistan Rights Movement held a peaceful rally against Pakistani and Iranian states’ atrocities in Balouchistan in front of the UN in Geneva, Switzerland. It was followed by the Conference on Human Rights situation in Balouchistan and Sindh. WSC was represented in both events by Dr Lakhu Luhana.
- WSC, represented by Ms Makhdoom, also participated in the 11th Session of UNHRC, held on 8 – 12 June 2009. Ms Makhdoom was one of the panellists on the following briefings conducted by the Interfaith International:
 - ~ Self Determination of Balochistan.
 - ~ Human Rights in Pakistan - In this briefing Suraiya spoke exclusively on the IDPs issue and the Sindhi martyrs who opposed the IDPs settlement in Sindh.
 - ~ Towards a Confederation of Peoples in South Asia
- During the 12th session of UNHRC, held in Geneva on 18 September 2009, WSC organised a briefing on “Self Determination of Sindh and Balochistan –A Strategy for Regional Peace”. This briefing was facilitated by Interfaith International. The panel who dealt with various aspects of the issue included Dr Charles Graves, Haleem Bhatti, Ghansham Das, Hidayat Bhutto, Noordin Mengal, Suraiya Makhdoom, Abdul Hamid Khan and Lakhu Luhana.



The briefing was very successful in attracting the attention to the issues, to a wide audience representing nations from Europe, Asia, Africa and America. The representatives of many renowned NGOs, European Union and UN Human Rights Council were also present at the briefing.



Alice Albinia, the author of the book "Empires of the Indus" reading excerpts from her book on the 21st International Conference of World Sindhi Congress



On behalf of WSC, the Chariman Dr. Haleem Bhatti presented oral intervention on agenda Item 5 – Human Rights Bodies and Mechanisms - Rights of Indigenous People on 30th September 2009. In his statement, Dr Bhatti focussed on the denial of human rights of indigenous Sindhi people by the Government of Pakistan.

- The US chapter sent updates of human rights situation in Sindh to some US officials, members of US Congress and academics.
- On behalf of WSC, Ms. Ambreen Hisbani participated in the EU parliament meetings to disseminate and discuss the plight of Sindhi peoples.

Conferences and events

In 2008-2009 WSC organised a number of events and conferences, raising the political and cultural awareness among the delegates and promotion of the causes of the organisation. The following is a brief account of the key events held during the period 2008-2009:

- **Annual General Meeting:** The Annual General Meeting of WSC was held on 4 October 2009 in London.
- **Annual International Conference:** WSC held its 21st International conference on “Sovereignty of Sindh for World Peace” on 3 October 2009 in London. A consensus view was adopted at the conference that the decentralization of Pakistani hegemony and the presence of a sovereign Sindh could create a new path to democracy and a new method of counteracting pan-Islamic forces.

Several distinguished scholars and activists from Sindh, Balochistan, UK, USA and Canada joined the conference, with prominent speakers including Mr. Sana Baloch, ex-Senator of Pakistan, Mr. Harbiyar Marri, Dr. Naseer Dashti, Isar Kalyani, Humera Rehman, Munawar Laghari and Noorudin Mengal. Along with speeches, a book reading session by Ms Alice Alibina, the writer of a new book 'Empires of Indus,' and a Sindhi soul music session were all part of the full-day Conference.

The conference passed 25 resolutions concerning human rights and distributive economic and political justice in Pakistan. Conference demanded that International committee to investigate the targeted killing of Baloch and Sindhi leaders, and the convening of an international meeting by to discuss the case of Sindh and Balochistan. Conference further demanded the immediate stopping of military operation in Balochistan.

Conference delegates pleaded to USA and EU that international aid to Pakistan should be made conditional to the restoration of the human rights and to equitable distribution of resources to all provinces of Pakistan.

- **Birth Anniversary of GM Syed:** WSC organised 105th Birth Anniversary of GM Syed on 17th January 2009 in London to remember and pay tribute to the life and contribution of father of Sindhi nationalism. The anniversary was attended by Sindhi and Baloch political and human rights activists.
- **Seminar on People of Sindh:** A seminar on “People of Sindh” was organised by WSC on 20th June 2009 in Manchester, UK. The renowned panellists included Alice Albinia author of “Empires of the Indus”, Professor Roger Ballard Director of South Asian Studies. The issues, such as, the scarcity of water in Indus adversely impacting on the livelihood of people, the importance of Pakistani pre-



Islamic era for a secular identity and the rise of Islamisation on the secular and sufi traditions of Sindhi people were discussed.

- In collaboration with GM Syed Memorial Committee USA Chapter, WSC organised Saeen G M Syed event in Houston in January 2009. Hundreds of people attended the event.
- Dr. Saghir Shaikh presented a paper in a Seminar organized by Sindhi Language Authority and Sindh Education Trust on Technology and Sindhi Language in Sindh.



Distinguished speakers presenting their views and papers at the 21st International Conference of the WSC



- **University of Mumbai, India Conference:** On behalf of WSC, Dr. Saghir Shaikh attended the University of Mumbai Conference on 'Sindhayat an Essence of Secularism in Mumbai on 22 January 2009. He read a paper on role of technology in promotion of sindhi language. Dr. Shaikh also participated in a large Sindhi get together in Jaipur. Dr. Shaikh presented G M Syed Award to the Sindhi Sabha Chair, Mr. Sunder Agnani. He met several Sindhi Leaders such as Mr. Keerat Bababni and Mr Hotumalani, Mr Matlani and Mr Babani, Mr. Butain and several other writers and cultural activists. etc.
- **Seminar in Delhi, India:** Lakhu Luhana, the Secretary of WSC was invited as a keynote speaker at a Seminar in Delhi organised by Indus Valley Civilisation Institute. The title of the seminar was "Shah, Sachal, Sami and their relevance to Modern Sindh". WSC also attended another cultural evening in Delhi attended by hundreds of Sindhis.

WSC Canada chapter also worked proactively and organised many successful events.

- **Workshop on Human Rights Education and Activism:** Siraj Makhdoom, one of the organizers of the WSC Canada chapter organized a workshop on "Human Rights Education and Activism" highlighting persecution of the Sindhis in Pakistan on 18 April 2009 in Calgary, Canada. The workshop featured seminars by prominent Canadian peace and human rights organizations. Among the distinguished guests was Ms. Janet Keeping, President of Sheldon Chumir Foundation for Ethics in Leadership of Calgary Chapter.

The renowned speakers included Desmond Kary, Dr. Saghir Shaikh, Zahid Makhdoom, Fayaz Shaikh, Ms. Diane Diazen, Asim Kaghzi.

- **Cultural and social gathering:** WSC Canada also organised "A Get-to-Gather with Gul Agha" held in Calgary downtown restaurant on August 28, 2009 evening. Various Calgarians attended the gathering and participated in a progressive and informative discussion on culture, literature and social issues of Sindh. Gul Agha expressed his valuable thoughts with all participants.

Expressing our views – *press releases*

WSC has remained conscious of the human rights violations and other issues affecting the Sindhi people as well as Balochistan and has not stopped from issuing press releases and policy statements:

Date	Description
September 2009	Reopening and investigation of the case of Shaheed Nazir Abbassi
June 2009	Condemnation of the extra-judicial killings by police of three Sindhi political activists demonstrating against the settlement of IDPs in Sindh
May 2009	Concerns expressed over the grave historical threat posed to Sindhi people resulting from migration of a large number of people to Sindh resulting from ongoing conflict in Malakanad region of Pakhtunkhuwa
April 2009	Restoration of Sindhi rural seats in educational institutions in Karachi
April 2009	Condemnation of the extra-judicial killings of three Baloch political leaders and expression of solidarity with Baloch nation
February 2009	Demand for immediate release of Sindhi political leader and activists
January 2009	Condemnation of charges against Sindhi activists for speeches
November 2008	Condemnation of the Mumbai terror attacks



Dr. Haleem Bhatti, Chairman World Sindhi Congress and Mir Ghulam Hussain of Balochistan Action Committee presenting the petition for Violation of Human Rights in Sindh and Balochistan at 10 Downing Street in London



Working side-by-side with Baloch activists

WSC has continued to participate and collaborate with Baloch people on the issues affecting them. WSC has participated in organisation and participation of a number of events, including the following:

Date	Heading	Description
30 August 2009	Nawab Akbar Bugti anniversary	WSC collaborated with Baloch Human Rights Council to organize a memorial meeting to honour Nawab Akber Bugti
19 April 2009	Protest rally held in front OF BBC in London	WSC collaborated with Baloch Human Rights Council for the demonstration held in front of Bush House (BBC World service office in London) to inform the international community of the atrocities of Pakistan against the Baloch, specially the murder of the three Baloch leaders.
20 March 2009	Pakistani state terrorism in Balochistan	WSC collaborated with Interfaith international in holding a demonstration in front of the United Nations office in Geneva Switzerland.

Our affiliation with Liberation

Having consultative status with United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), Liberation is an old organization, fighting for the cause of oppressed people and nations all over the world. Liberation is chaired by Jeremy Corbyn MP. WSC is an affiliated Organization of Liberation and as such has a seat on its Central Council.

- WSC attended the Annual General Meeting of Liberation on 4 July 2009 and presented a resolution focussing on issues such as IDPs, killing of peaceful demonstrators, economy; plunder of natural resources, the plight of Hindus, language and culture.
At the AGM, Ms. Suraiya Makhdoom, the Senior Vice- Chair of WSC was elected as a Member of Central Council of Liberation.
- Also, Ms Makhdoom wrote an article on the issues of 'State Violence against Women in Pakistan, which was published in Liberation Newsletter.
- Dr. Rubina Greenwood of WSC is collaborating with Liberation on Human Rights of Women. She is working with Liberation on this matter.

Recognition of work for the cause - GM Syed Memorial Award

This award has been established by WSC in collaboration with The G M Syed Memorial Committee (GMC) to honour the memory of G M Syed and encourage those who share his dreams of freedom of Sindh and other oppressed nations in Pakistan. Each year, this award is granted to one or two activists or scholars, who have made exceptional contributions to peace and justice in Sindh and/or to awareness about Sindh.

During 2008-2009, WSC awarded two "achievement Awards" to Sindhi Luminaries, Mr Abdul Wahid Arisar and Mr Sunder Agnani. The nominations for G M Syed Memorial 2009 have been invited on 11 October 2009.



WSC office bearer for 2009-2011 taking oath of their respective offices at the 20th International Conference of WSC held in London on 25th November 2008



Our organisation

Personnel

Officers (2009-2011)	
Haleem Bhatti	Chairman
Lakhu Luhana	Secretary General
Suriya Makhdoom	Senior Vice Chairperson
Malik Dino Shaikh	Vice Chairperson
Sanjay Ahuja	Deputy Secretary General (UK)
Umed Ali Laghari	Deputy Secretary General (North America)
Sultan Mahar	Finance Secretary
Ali Memon	Information Secretary
Rizwan Bhatti	Cultural Secretary
Kadir Jatoi	Member Executive Committee
Rubina Shaikh	Member Executive Committee

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