

WSC Annual Report 2015-2016 |

ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

ABOUT

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Purpose of the Organisation

World Sindhi Congress ("WSC") is a human rights advocacy organization based in the UK, US, and Canada. 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, the UK, and Louisiana, US, organized only to carry out non-profit activities.

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Executive Committee (2014-2016)	
Lakhu Luhana	Chairman
Saghir Shaikh	Secretary General
Rubina Shaikh	Senior Vice Chairperson
Sattar Zangejo	Vice Chairperson
Farhan Kaghzi	Deputy Secretary General
Gul Sanai	Finance Secretary
Ali Memon	Information Secretary
Zubair Bhambhro	Cultural Secretary
Hidayat Bhutto	Organizer UK Chapter
Umed Laghari	Organizer US Chapter
Asif Panwhar	Organizer Canada Chapter



Mission

The World Sindhi Congress (WSC) promotes and undertakes the struggle for the right ofself-determination for Sindhis. WSC continues to provide a voice to Sindhis and international communities around the world who want to see Sindh as a sovereign state. WSC believes this sovereignty is essential to achieving a just and lasting peace in the region.

World Sindhi Congress Objectives

- To create a better understanding among the international community about the persecuted status of Sindhis in Pakistan and about Sindhi people's struggles for their human rights, including the right to self-determination.
- To support all organisations in Sindh working on human rights, sustainable development, equal rights for women, and religious minorities, as well as toadvocate conflict resolution and peaceful initiatives.
- To promote and encourage the solidarity of Sindhis living throughout the world.
- To create awareness of Sindhis worldwide by:
 - o organising seminars
 - o publishing newsletters, reports and research papers
 - working with media, non-governmental organizations, academics, and other conscientious individuals

The Backdrop - Sindh in 2015 and 2016

The period that this report covers (November 2015-November 2016) has been one of tragedy and triumph for the Sindhi nation. WSC has mourned the enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings of advocates and activists for the Sindhi Nation, and has also collaborated in numerous councils and protested with organisations to defend the rights of the Sindhi Nation:

- 1. Over 20 prominent Sindhi activists were killed extrajudicially.
- 2. More than 100 Sindhi political and civil society activists continue to remain missing.
- 3. The violence against a section of theindigenous population, Sindhi Hindus, continues to intensify. Scores of Sindhi Hindu girls are kidnapped and forced to convert and enter into marriages. This state-sponsored atmosphere of fear, persecutionand insecurity is perpetuated within this section of indigenous Sindhi people to force them to migrate.
- 4. The state-sponsored action to attack the secular Sindhi society intensified. Thousands of new fanatic religious schools (madrasahs) have mushroomed everywhere in Sindh. Taliban are being settledat strategic locations in Sindh.
- 5. Sindhi people were systematically marginalised in all spheres of social, cultural, and economic development while Sindh produced 70% of the wealth of Pakistan:
 - i. Sindh has the worst education in the entirety of Pakistan, worse than the war-torn area of FATA. Almost half of all the school-going children are not enrolled, andnearly 70% of girls in rural areas remain illiterate. More than 6 million primary school-going children are out of education.
 - ii. More than 50% of the Sindhi population remain under the absolute poverty line.
 - iii. The malnutrition among Sindhi people is comparable to African drought hit areas.
 - iv. The governance in Sindh is at its worst. The entirety of Sindh has become ruins. Hundreds of people are dying in Sindh needlessly from illnesses resulting from endemic poverty, malnutrition, and lack of basic health facilities.
 - v. The capital of Sindh, Karachi, has become the battleground for various immigrant communities; with support from the state establishment, who want to control the wealth of Karachi and Sindh, the capital has fallen to thebattle territory.

During this period, all sections of Sindhi society have put a heroic struggle against the grave violations of human rights and injustices. Not a single day goes by when Sindhi people have not been on the streets, protesting with strikes, processions, rallies, seminars and conferences to demand their democratic and human rights.

During this period, WSC stood in solidarity with the struggle of Sindhi people and continued to work with the international community to inform them about the persecution of Sindhi people. The activities of WSC undertaken during this period havetold the wider world about the plight of Sindhi people are outlined in the following sections.

World Sindhi Congress Accomplishments 2015-2016

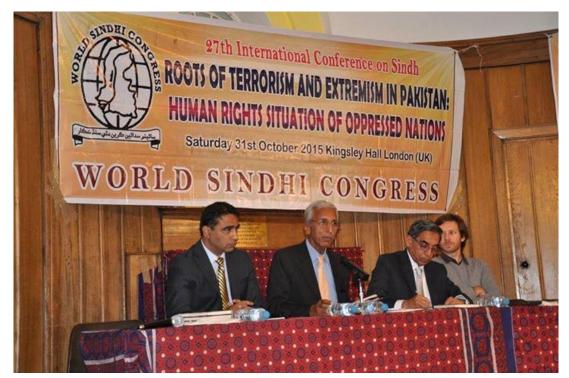
World Sindhi Congress spent this year paricipating in protests and conferences, attending United Nations events, and facilitating Sindhi celebrations. This year, WSC has:



- 1. Attended over 5 United Nations events internationally, with WSC members speaking to the United Nations audience.
- 2. Participated and cohosted 5 protests, gaining press in 7 different news outlets.
- 3. Worked with 5 different international organizations, attending and facilitating 5 conferences internationally.
- 4. Celebrated 6 culture events, bringing Sindhis together in the US, Canada, and the UK.
- 5. Released over 10 press releases about WSC activities to members and news outlets.

World Sindhi Congress Activities 2015-2016

October 31st-November 1st 2015- 27th International Conference on Sindh in London



WSC's 27th Annual Conference on Sindh brought Sindhis from around the world together in London to share speeches, presentations, books, music, movies, and food to create a community and a voice that speaks to the international world about Sindh and the struggle of Sindhis.

5 Dec 2015, London: Sindhi Culture Day

Sindhi Sangat UK & World Sindhi Congress arranged a Sindhi Culture & Awareness day Saturday, 5th December, 2015 at Frizing Hall, Bradford, UK. Hundreds of Sindhi families all over the UK attended the program all wearing Sindhi cultural dresses, topi, ajrak, susi, gaj, loee, loungee. Mrs HafeezanWadhio, KashafGillal and ShafaqSohu performed as stage secretary. ShahzadoWadhio, Secretary, General, SSUK, welcomed all guest and spoken on importance of the event, Sindhi culture, its uniqueness and cohesiveness.



12 Dec 2015, Calgary- Sindhi Culture Day

CALGARY, More than 200 Canadians of Sindhi origin gathered in a local community hall to celebrate their Annual "International Sindhi Cultural Day" on December 12th, 2015. Sindh is the home to the ancient Indus Valley civilization and is now a province in Pakistan. A vibrant Sindhi-Canadian community numbering in the thousands lives in various Canadian cities. More than 40 million Sindhis live in Sindh today and about 100 Million live in various countries across Asia, Africa, Europe, and America, constituting the Sindhi Diaspora. Sindhis are supportive of democracy and secularism and have been marginalized by Pakistan's military establishment. Sindhis around the globe are famous for their heritage emphasizing the peace, universalism, tolerance, hospitality and entrepreneurship of our culture.







16 Jan 2016, Houston - Celebration of GM Syed

Hundreds of Sindhi-Americans gathered in Houston, Texas this Saturday, January 16, 2016 to commemorate the 112th birthday of Mr. Saeen G. M. Syed, a national leader of the Sindhi people who waged a nonviolent struggle against Islamic fundamentalism in advocacy of Sindhi freedom. Sindh is home to the ancient Indus Valley civilization and is now a province in Pakistan. A vibrant Sindhi-American community, numbering in the tens of thousands, exists in various cities across the country, as well as in Canada and the UK. More than 40 million Sindhis live in Sindh today. Sindhis are supportive of democracy and secularism, and thus have been marginalized by Pakistan's military dictatorship and its Islamisc ideology.

The Houston event was put on by The G. M. Syed Memorial Committee, a Houston-based educational group, and World Sindhi Congress (WSC), a US, Canada, and UK human rights advocacy organization.



16 Jan 2016, Toronto- Celebration of GM Syed

In Toronto several dozens of Sindhi and Baloch families came to attend the 112th Birth Anniversary Commemoration at the Toronto North York Library on Saturday January 16th, 2016. Among those who attended and spoke were the Baloch leader Mr. Latif Johar, Zaffar Baloch, HajanKalhoro, Kamran Siddique , Asif Javed , Mumtaz Kashmiri, Jam Munir Ahmed, FizaKalhoro and DileepRatnani. Speaker highlighted the struggle and message of Saeen G M Syed and emphasized its relevance to today's societies in Pakistan and elsewhere. "Syed's message of tolerance, universalism and national self-determination resonates amongst Sindhi and Balochs," said Mr. Ratnani of World Sindhi Congress.

16 Jan 2016, Sheffield- Celebration of GM Syed

In Sheffield,UK, several dozens of Brits of Sindhi and Baloch origin gathered to pay tribute to Saeen G M Syed.

"Syed gave us the concept of modern nationhood and explained the meaning of freedom and peace," said Mr. SattarSoomro, Vice President of Sindhi Sangat, UK.

"Syed spent more than 30 years in custody and even died in custody of the Pakistani Government. Amnesty International nominated him as a 'Prisoner of Conscience,'" said Dr.LakhuLuhano, the Chairperson of the World Sindhi Congress (WSC).

Dr.Hidayat Bhutto, Organizer of the WSC UK/EU Chapter said, "Saeen GM Sayed was the founding Chairman of World Sindhi Congress till his death, and father of Sindhi Nation. We celebrate his birthday every year and get guidance from his teachings and philosophy."

10 March 2016: Protest in Geneva

On March 10th 2016, World Sindhi Congress (WSC) in collaboration with other oppressed nations of Pakistan such as Baloch, Kashmiri, Siraiki, GilgitBalistan held a protest rally in front of the Palace de Nations, the UN Human Rights headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. The protest was held against the gross human rights violations perpetrated on Sindhi people, including extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances of Sindhi activists, forced conversions and kidnappings of Sindhi Hindu girls, state sponsored spread of religious extremism in Sindh, forced population movement into Sindh and misappropriation of natural resources of Sindh.



28 April 2016, Stockholm: Drivers of Peace and Democratisation: National Minority Rights and Diaspora Action with UNPO

On April 28th, 2016 in Stockholm, Sweden, the XXI Session of the Presidency for Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) was called. Dr LakhuLuhana, Chairman of the World Sindhi Congress, drawing on the example of his own organization, highlighted the important role of diasporas in creating a better understanding of the rich cultures and often little known struggles of unrepresented nations and peoples across the world. He further stressed the importance of the unrepresented to join forces and create transnational alliances in their pursuit for peace, democracy and freedom: "The oppressed and sorrowful, let us sit down and share our suffering, let us together revive our memories of grief, which is common".



14 May 2016, Bradford: Sindhi Day

On May 14th, 2016, World Sindhi Congress (WSC), Sindhi Sangat United Kingdom (SSUK) and International Sindhi Women Organisation (ISWO) commemorated the Sindhi Day to pay tribute to Sindhi martyrs. The event was held in Bradford on 14th May. Sindhis and human rights activists of other nations from across the UK participated in the event. The congregation is an annual event to remember those who gave ultimate sacrifices for their motherland and people of Sindh in its thousands years history for survival as a



18 June 2016, London: Protest Against Violenceto Women and Girls

On 18th June 2016, Sindhis gathered opposite 10 Downing St to protest violence against women and girls in Pakistan. Throughout Pakistan, women and girls encounter discrimination, oppression, violence and abuse at the hands of both the state and non-state actors. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) reported a staggering number of crimes against women and girls in Pakistan in 2015.



21 June 2016, Geneva: UNPO and ALRC Side Event to UN Human Rights Council

the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization joined forces with the Asian Legal Resource Centre and the Right Livelihood Award Foundation in a side-event to the 32nd Regular Session of the UN Human Rights Council, at the Palais des Nations, in Geneva, Switzerland. The event was titled, ""Enforced Disappearances and Extrajudicial Executions in Pakistan." Mr LakhuLuhanaand Mr Ghulam SarwarMemon of World Sindhi Congress looked at the enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings as the methods most often used by the Pakistani regime to instil fear among its marginalized ethnic communities.

26 June 2016, Artesia: UN World Refugee Day

Dr Saghir Shaikh, the Secretary General of World Sindhi Congress (WSC), attended the UN World Refugee Day organized jointly by KHC, Inc. and Jagirtii, Inc. in Artesia, CA, USA on June 26th, 2016. The World Refugee Day is a day the United Nations has dedicated to celebrating the courage, strength, and determination of those who are forced to flee their homeland under threat of violence.



28 August 2016, London: Protest Against CPEC

Activists of UK-based Baloch and Sindhi groups held a demonstration against the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and human rights violations outside the Chinese embassy here, demanding that the \$46-billion project be called off.

World Sindhi Congress chairman LakhumalLuhana told Hindustan Times the massive trade and transit project was responsible for "gross human rights violations".

"It is a matter of life and death for us," Luhana said, adding there were no plans for rehabilitating thousands of people displaced by the CPEC. The project is being imposed by Islamabad but could not materialise without the people's consent, he said.



4 September 2016, Detriot: SANA Convention

Senior Vice Chairwomen Rubina Shaikh addressed the Sindhi Association of North America at their 32nd convention in Detriot, Michigan





20 Sept 2016, Geneva: UNPO Council and Protest

On 20 September 2016, the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) joined forces with the Asian Legal Resource Centre and the Right Livelihood Award Foundation in a side-event to the 33rd Regular Session of the UN Human Rights Council, at the Palais des Nations, in Geneva. Bringing together representatives from Pakistan's oppressed regions and occupied territories the event drew attention to Pakistan's deteriorating human rights record, including the systematic killing of lawyers. Mr Lakhumal Luhana of the World Sindhi Congress stressed that the CPEC "is much more than an economic corridor... it is a game changer that will lead to the end of these nations [Baloch, Sindhi, Gilgit-Baltistan]" and warned that the implementation of the \$46 billon project will bring intensification to all existing conflicts in the region.

Prior to the event representatives and supporters of Sindh, Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan and PoK gathered at Place des Nations in front of the UN to demonstrate against the gross human rights violations perpetrated in the respective regions, including the imposition of CPEC without the consent of the indigenous population.



World Sindhi Congress in Social Media

World Sindhi Congress connects Sindhis around the world with social media. WSC shares their events, news, and updates every day. This year, WSC has:

- 1. Posted over 1000 updates on Sindhi news, culture, photos, and events.
- 2. Gained 100,000 followers on Facebook
- 3. Doubled followers on Twitter and Instagram.
- 4. Shared on 8 platforms, including Google+, YouTube, and LinkedIn.
- 5. Expanded to Tumblr.









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