



Annual
Conference | 2017

Annual Report 2016-2017

UK: 22 Newfields, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL8 6YT
Tel. +44 (01707) 330437 ~ Fax +44 (870) 1226007

Canada: 20 Bridleridge Gdns SW, Calgary, AB T2Y4L3
Tel. +1 403 400 5109

USA: 711 7th Street NW, Springhill, LA 71075
Tel. +1(818) 917-6910 ~ Fax +1(866) 366-9603

worldsindhicongress.org
info@worldsindhicongress.org

Table of Contents

About World Sindhi Congress	3
- Mission	
- Objectives	
- Executive Committee	
The Current Situation in Sindh	5
World Sindhi Congress Activities and Accomplishments	7
World Sindhi Congress Media Presence	15

ABOUT

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.

Mission:

The World Sindhi Congress (WSC) promotes and undertakes the struggle for the right of self-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.

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 organizations in Sindh working on human rights, sustainable development, equal rights for women, and religious minorities, as well as to advocate conflict resolution and peaceful initiatives.
- To promote and encourage the solidarity of Sindhis living throughout the world.
- To create awareness of Sindhis worldwide by:
 - Organizing seminars
 - Publishing newsletters, reports, and research papers
 - Working with media, non-governmental organizations, academics, and other conscientious individuals

Registration Information

The World Sindhi Congress is a registered company with the Companies House in England and Wales (Company Number: 03842312). World Sindhi Congress, Inc. is a registered non-profit organization with the State of Louisiana (Charter No. 40032259 N). World Sindhi Congress is a registered Corporation in Canada (996593-9).

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Executive Committee

Chairwoman: Dr. Rubina Shaikh

Secretary General, Dr. Lakhu Luhano

Senior Vice Chairperson: Umed Laghari

Vice Chairman: Zubair Bhambhro

Deputy Secretary General: Asif Panhwar

Finance Secretary: Hidayat Bhutto

Information Secretary: Farhan Kaghzi

Cultural Secretary: Gul Sanai

Organizers and Committees for WSC Chapters:

UK and Europe:

Organizer: Hidayat Bhutto

Committee: Abdul Rauf Laghari, Rustam Mirjat, Moazam MughulJabir Shar, Ahmed Nawaz Ansari, Haresh Kumar, Marvi Baloch

USA:

Organizer: Dr. Saghir Shaikh

Committee: Malik Dino Shaikh, Rehman Kakepoto, Mansoor Samo

Canada:

Organizer: Hajan Kalhoro

Committee: Siraj Makhdoom

The Current Situation in Sindh

Sindhi people are currently facing one of the worst onslaughts of violence in their national history from Pakistani establishment agencies. This includes disappearances and extrajudicial killings of Sindhi political activists, the state-sponsored rise in religious extremism, persecution of religious minorities, misappropriation of natural resources, and the complete denial of rights and opportunities for social, economic, cultural and political development. The government's actions result in systematic discrimination, hostility and the persecution of indigenous Sindhi people. At present, the Sindhi people are facing the following rights violations:

Extrajudicial Killings, Targeted Killings, and Enforced Disappearances of Sindhi Activists

Extrajudicial killing of political and human rights activists have become a norm in Pakistan, where security agencies are operating with impunity. The security agencies' modus-operandi is to abduct, torture, and hold the activists incommunicado for as long as they see fit. Later, the activists' are either killed and dumped on the roadsides, or released, but only after they have been brutally tortured and physically and psychologically traumatized. Almost all of the eyewitnesses to these disappearances have indicated that the perpetrators seem to be official security personnel – rangers, police, and intelligence agencies. The government denies all claims of enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings and there is no recourse available within the judicial system, allowing the agencies to continue to act with impunity.

Operation of Security Agencies in Sindh and CPEC

Within the last year, rangers have been carrying out periodic operations within the province, entering into hundreds of houses, ransacking the property, humiliating women, children and elderly, and arresting scores of political activists. If the activists were not present, the rangers would arrest their parents and relatives. Many of them are still missing. We believe the aim of these operations is to create an atmosphere of fear for Sindhi people in order for them to more easily submit to the highly controversial, multi-billion dollar project called the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Sindhi people believe CPEC will have huge adverse implications in terms of their right to land and resources, their development and demography, and the environment.

Forced Conversions and Kidnappings of Sindhi Hindus

Sindhi Hindus are facing increasingly targeted discrimination and violence including kidnappings for extortion, abductions and forced conversions of Hindu girls, and forced servitude. The increasing violence has resulted in the exodus of the Hindu

population out of Pakistan. In 2016, scores of cases were reported of Hindu girls, the majority under the age of 16, being forcibly abducted and converted. In most instances the girls were also forcibly married off or kept in the custody of their kidnappers.

Spread of Religious Extremism in Sindh

There are an estimated 20,000 new madrassahs in Sindh, mostly funded by foreign money and under the patronage of the government. Islamic militism is increasing, and Sindh has started seeing unprecedented violence against non-Muslim and non-Sunni sects of Muslims. The text books and school curriculum teach intolerance and bigotry, further aggravating tensions between these groups. Several incidents of destruction and burning of Christian, Hindu and Ahmedi places of worship have been reported.

Forced Population Movement into Sindh

The State is actively engaged in internally displacing people by bringing non-Sindhi populations from the KPK and Punjab provinces and settling them in Sindh. The federal government has appropriated large swaths of public lands and is building mega-cities to settle non-Sindhis. This forced population movement will turn Sindhis into a minority in their homeland and negatively impact their way of life and culture.

Misappropriation of Sindh's Natural Resources

Sindh remains one of the most resourceful states of Pakistan with one of the largest oil and gas reserves in the world. These resources contribute to 69% of all of Pakistan's revenue, and Sindh has the only seaport in the country. Sindh has 71% of the gas fields in Pakistan, 62% of the oil of Pakistan, and one of the largest coal deposits in the world and 99% of Pakistan's total coal reserves (worth an estimated \$23 trillion). However, Sindh only receives 11% of federal funding and 60% of Sindhis live below the poverty line. Fifty percent of the population has diseases borne out of inadequate sanitation, and a lack of health facilities and proper infrastructure. The literacy rates among Sindhi women are 30%, and about 7 million Sindhi children under ten years old are out of school. More than 60% of Sindhis do not have access to drinkable water. Year after year, the Federal government appropriates these funds and gets approval from the mainly Punjabi-dominated military, the national assembly, and the senate. There is no recourse in a judicial system that is subservient to the legislative assemblies.

WSC Activities and Accomplishments

WSC organized and participated in a number of community gatherings promoting Sindhi culture and heritage during the 2016 to 2017 year. The organization also led a number of protests throughout the year in New York, London, and Geneva, specifically regarding enforced disappearances of Sindhi activists. The WSC put forth 26 press releases condemning suicide bombing attacks, enforced disappearances, killing of Sindhi laborers, the murder of university student, Mashal Khan, and negligence of the Pakistani government regarding violence against Sindhis, among others. The organization has continued its advocacy work with the UN, members of US and UK legislatures, and the UNPO, including letter writing, speeches, and meetings.

Annual International Conference on Sindh London, October 15-16, 2016

The 28th International Conference on Sindh was held at the University of Westminster, Harrow Campus, London, UK. Several dozen delegates attended the conference and traveled from different parts of the UK, EU, USA, Canada, India, Sindh, and Balochistan. A number of prominent speakers addressed topics such as CPEC, enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, misappropriation of Sindhi land, the degradation of Sindhi culture, and Pakistan's policies of oppressing Sindhi people, and the need to advance the Sindhi nation and preserve its culture. Several outlets covered the conference.



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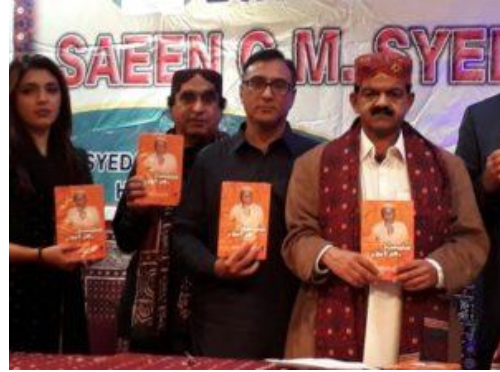
Sindhi Cultural Day Calgary, London & Toronto, December 3, 2016

Over 100 Canadians of Sindhi origin gathered to celebrate Sindhi Cultural Day in Calgary. The celebration brought together community members, leaders, and government officials within their respective cities. The event featured traditional Sindhi

clothing, food, music, and handicrafts. The London celebration was also successful with a full banquet hall of participants. At each event location, WSC worked in partnership with other Sindhi Diaspora organizations in their respective areas.

GM Sayed Memorial Houston, Bradford & Toronto, January 2017

2017 marked the 113th celebration of the birthday of Saeen GM Sayed. To celebrate, WSC helped organize memorial celebrations in the US, UK and Canada. GM Sayed, considered the pioneer of modern Sindhi nationalism, was celebrated with music, cake cutting, and speeches at each locale.



Protest against Forced Conversion of Girls in Pakistan, London, February 12, 2017

Activists staged a protest in front of the Pakistan embassy in London, calling for the government to create legislation to end forced conversion of Hindu girls in Sindh. The growing problem is not only recognized as a violation of minority rights, but also a women's rights issue.

Participation in the Meeting on the 2017 Population Census February 3, 2017

World Sindhi Congress participated in a meeting called by Sayed Jalal Mehmood Shah, President of the Sindh United Party (SUP) regarding the 2017 population census. The meeting was attended by representatives of Sindhi patriotic parties, civil society organisations, intellectuals and other political parties including Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz-



Bashir Khan Qureshi (JSQM-BQ), Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz- Arisar (JSQM-A), Jeay Sindh Mahaz- Riaz Chandio (JSM-RC), Jeay Sindh Mahaz- Sarwar Sahito (JSM-SS), Jeay Sindh Tahreek (JST), Awami Jamhori Party (AJP), Sindh Tarqi Pasand Party (STP), Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N), Sindh National Movement (SNM), Jeay Sindh Librel Front (JSLF), Sindhi Adabi Sangat (SAS), Sindh Vision (SV), Sindh National Party (SNP), Sindh Writers and Thinkers Forum (SWTF), Sindh Democratic Forum (SDF), Adamshumari Sujaghi Committee (ASC), Sindhi Association of North America (SANA). The meeting deliberated on various aspects, issues, challenges, and threats for Sindhi people in the context of the population census that began on March 15, 2017. The meeting also discussed the action plan to deal with these challenges.

Protest against CPEC outside Chinese Embassy London, February 11, 2017

Baloch activist Javed Mengal believes Balochistan to be in a state of war with the



Pakistani authorities as they forcefully displace people to clear land for a multi-billion-dollar infrastructure project, the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). This project is meant to connect Balochistan's capital, Quetta, to the city of Kashgar, Xinjiang – home to the oppressed Uyghurs. The World Baloch Organisation, along with

WSC, staged a protest in front of the Chinese Embassy in London, against the human rights violations carried out for the construction of the CPEC and the sharp increase in the economic exploitation of Balochistan's resources.

Participation in 34th Session of the UN Human Rights Council Geneva, March 14, 2017

Delegates from WSC participated in side events during the 34th Session in Geneva, including a panel titled "Human Rights in Pakistan: Oppressed Nations Perspective."

The event was organized by the Asian Legal Resource Centre and WSC. Dr. Rubina Greenwood was one of the panelists, discussing the human rights violations affecting Sindhi people. Dr. Laku Luhana also spoke at the event. The previous day, Dr. Hidayat Bhutto delivered a statement on the topic of



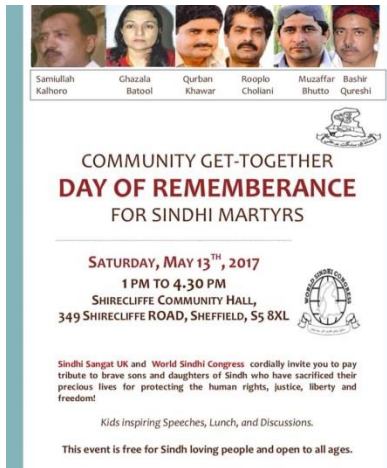
freedom of expression in Sindh at an event organized by AIPD - Action internationale pour la paix et le développement dans la région des Grands Lacs (AIPD-GL).



Protest Against Human Rights Violations in Sindh, Geneva, March 15, 2017

The protest in Geneva was organized to bring light to the myriad human rights violations occurring in Sindh. Topics included military exercises in Balochistan and Sindh, enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings of activists, displacement of people and misappropriation of resources in the building of CPEC, and violence against religious minorities.

The goal of the protest was to draw attention to Sindhi issues at the UN and to call for action from the UN to pressure Pakistan to address the rights violations.



Day of Remembrance for Sindhi Martyrs Sheffield, UK, May 17, 2017

The annual Day of Remembrance was held May 17th to commemorate the Sindhi martyrs who have lost their lives in the fight for human rights, liberty and freedom. The event included speeches, activities, documentaries and lively discussions.

Participation in the European Parliament Conference on CPEC May 19, 2017

Delegates from WSC participated in the European Parliament-hosted conference titled "Who Pays the Price? CPEC and the Challenges Facing Ethnic and Religious Minorities in Pakistan." Dr. Rubina Greenwood spoke on the implications of CPEC for Sindh and how it will adversely impact the province and Sindhi people.



Protest against Disappearances of Activists Geneva, June 14, 2017

WSC held a protest on 14th June in front of UN Human Rights Council in Geneva against enforced disappearances of Sindhi political activists, CPEC and other human rights abuses of Sindhi people. Sindhi, Baloch, Gilgit and Baltistan, Pakistani administered Kashmir, and human rights defenders of other nations attended the protest. At the end of protest a petition was submitted to UN Secretary General and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Protest against Enforced Disappearances in Sindh New York, August 18, 2017

SANA and WSC protested near the Pakistan consulate in New York against enforced disappearances by state secret agencies. Many community members,



organizers, family, and friends came together to protest the illegal, inhumane and unconstitutional abductions of peaceful Sindhi political activists, journalists, and human rights workers in Sindh, Pakistan.

Protest against Musharraf's Entry into UK London, August 29, 2017



World Sindhi Congress held a protest in front of the Prime Minister's building in London to protest the entry of the former president of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf, due to his involvement in the genocide of the Baloch and Sindhi people. WSC Chairman Lakhu Luhana spoke at the protest, outlining the government's involvement in the atrocities committed against of the Sindhi and Baloch people. The protesters chanted "Pakistan stop killing Sindhi people" and as well as other slogans.

Protest against Enforced Disappearances and Letter to UK Prime Minister London, September 9, 2017

Scores of Sindhi and Baloch activists, as well as representatives of organizations such as the UNPO, gathered opposite 10 Downing Street to bring awareness to the ongoing human rights violations being perpetrated in Sindh, Pakistan. The participants raised slogans against the Pakistani government's use of enforced disappearances and displayed pictures of several of the disappeared persons. The speeches centered on demanding Pakistan to end the human rights violations being carried out against Sindhi and Baloch people and to release all those who have been abducted. In conjunction



with the protest, a WSC delegation submitted a petition at the residence of British Prime Minister Theresa May, to inform her of the human rights violations being carried out against the Sindhi people and to seek her support for their release.

Advocacy Meetings with Canadian Members of Parliament Calgary, September 12, 2017

WSC has written to high-ranking members of the Canadian government in order to shed light on the issue of enforced disappearances in Sindh, noting the current number of missing persons is approximately 160. The WSC team met with Members of Parliament including Mr. Tom Kmiec, Mr. Bob Benzen, Ms. Stephanie Kusie and Mr. Pat Kelly. WSC team briefed them about the grave human rights violations in Sindh by security forces,



including the forced conversion of Hindu minority girls and women. They listen carefully and assured their support to pressure the Pakistani government to end such human rights violations and then addressed Parliament to explain the current situation to his colleagues on the Parliamentary floor.

Protest against Enforced Disappearances Ottawa, September 29, 2017

WSC and SANA organized a protest in front of Canadian Parliament to speak out against the tactic of enforced disappearances of political activists and to draw Parliament's attention to the human rights abuses being committed in Pakistan. Community members from Toronto and Ottawa were present to chant slogans and display signs calling for the return of the missing persons. Mr. Tom Kmiec, member of Parliament, also joined the protest. In addition to the protest, members from WSC and SANA delivered a petition to the Prime Minister's office calling for Canada to pressure Pakistan to end its rights violations against Sindhi people.



Participation at UNHRC 36th Session Geneva, September 20, 2017

Several delegates from WSC participated in multiple sessions at the 36th Session of the UN Human Rights Council between September 11th and September 22nd. During the Session, two members of the delegation delivered public statements; Dr. Lakhu Luhana spoke on the issue of enforced disappearances of political and human rights activists on September 18th and the following day Dr. Hidayat Bhutto



spoke about the human rights violations in Sindh, including forced conversions and extrajudicial killings. The delegation participated in meetings with the Committee on Enforced Disappearances as well as the Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances. Additionally, the delegation staged a protest in front of the Palace de Nations on September 20th. The protest was designed to bring awareness to the problem of enforced disappearances in Pakistan and ask the international community to take note and take action against such rights violations. The delegates also participated in additional events

during the session, discussing the alarming amount of human rights abuses being carried out against Sindhi people, their cultural genocide, and what that means for the province and the Sindhi community.



Secretary General Featured at UNPO September 13, 2017

For the "Who is UNPO" feature, the UNPO interviewed Lakhmal Luhana, Secretary General of World Sindhi Congress. The Secretary General discussed Sindhi history and culture as well as the current human rights situation and violations occurring in Sindh, Pakistan.

Conference for the Emancipation of Sindhi People Washington, D.C. October 5, 2017

Delegates belonging to various Sindhi Diaspora organizations gathered in the capital city of the US for a historic two-day conference to explore ways in which to collectively work toward the emancipation of Sindhis in Pakistan and to create an integrated platform for Diaspora Sindhis. The meeting concluded with a consensus that for lasting



peace, equality and justice, all four constituent nations must have the right to self-determination with the right to exercise secession. The long-term goal of the integrated platform is to carry out activities and advocacy for Sindhi national self-determination. Participants

included representatives from the Sindhi Foundation (SF), World Sindhi Congress (WSC), International Sindhi Women Organization (ISWO), G. M Sayed Memorial Committee, Sindhi American Political Action Committee (SAPAC), Rights Now

Pakistan (RNP), Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz (JSQM-USA), G. M. Sayed Studies Board, and a few prominent community members.

Participation at UNPFII 16th Session New York, April 27, 2017



Delegate from WSC attended UNPFII 16th Session held in United Nations Headquarters in New York, USA. The session was under special Theme, “Tenth Anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: measures taken to implement the Declaration”.

Issuing Statements of Condemnation

Throughout the 2016-2017 year, WSC has released numerous statements condemning atrocities and rights violations. The statements included condemning the murder of Mashal Khan, a university student, the abduction of political activists such as Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz (Arisar) JSQM-A, the murder of Sindhi laborers in Balochistan, and various terrorist attacks around the world.

World Sindhi Congress Media Presence

World Sindhi Congress connects Sindhis around the world with social media. WSC shares their events, news, and updates every day across eight platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Google+ and Tumblr. World Sindhi Congress continues to expand their social media presence and strengthen the international Sindhi network.

This year, WSC has:

- Posted over 1000 updates on Sindhi news and culture
- Shared 20 events, conferences, and protests
- Recorded 35 videos of events and conference participation
- Reached:
 - 105,500 followers on Facebook
 - 6000 followers on Twitter
 - 5000 followers on Instagram

