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Advocating Human Rights and National  
Self-Determination for Sindhis

Joint Submission to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights  
4<sup>th</sup> Universal Periodic Review during the 42<sup>nd</sup> session Islamic Republic of Pakistan

## **Detrimental Impacts of Land Development and Infrastructure Projects in Pakistan**

**Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation (UNPO)**

**&**

**World Sindhi Congress (WSC)**

The **Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO)** is an international movement, and membership-based organization established to empower unrepresented and marginalized peoples worldwide and protect their fundamental rights, particularly their right to self-determination. The peoples represented within the UNPO membership are all united by one shared condition: they are denied equal representation in national or international governance institutions. Consequently, their opportunity to participate nationally or internationally is limited. They struggle to fully realize their rights to civil and political participation and control their economic, social and cultural development. In many cases, they are subject to the worst forms of violence and repression. The UNPO's membership includes the people of Sindh, Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan in Pakistan. [www.unpo.org](http://www.unpo.org)

The **World Sindhi Congress (WSC)** is one of the most prominent human rights education and advocacy organizations for Sindh and Sindhis. The main objective of WSC is to establish an infrastructure to teach and disseminate educational material to the public, including, but not limited to, material relating to the culture and literature of the Sindhi Peoples, their persecuted status in Pakistan, and their peaceful struggle for the human rights including the right to self-determination through publications, lectures, media or otherwise. [www.worldsindhicongress.org](http://www.worldsindhicongress.org)

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# **Detrimental Impacts of Land Development and Infrastructure projects in Pakistan**

## **I. Introduction**

1. This report highlights significant human rights concerns related to Pakistan's land and infrastructure development projects, focusing on Sindh. It is based on in-depth studies by the two submitting organizations, including interviews conducted by the UNPO with impacted community members regarding dam-building and the right to water in Pakistan and the respective experiences of their members. It shows that international guarantees accorded to minority and indigenous communities, notable requirements for free, prior and informed consent and the attendant civil and political rights necessary for its full realization, are not being upheld in Pakistan, with disastrous consequences for the indigenous communities through whose lands such projects are driven.
2. The human rights violations identified in this report include violations of a) the right to self-determination; b) the right to land, c) the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and d) the right to liberty and security of person (incl. prohibition of arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances).
3. The submitting organizations urge concrete measures to be urgently taken to resolve what amounts to a continued human rights violation for Pakistan's oppressed nations and indigenous people, including cessation of land expropriations, investigations into the priority of existing land expropriations and occupations, return of land to the communities where such investigations show expropriations and occupations were not made in accordance with domestic and international law, and measures to be put in place to guarantee the free, prior and informed consent of communities through which land and infrastructure development projects are being driven.

## **II. Denial of the Right to Self-Determination and Free-Prior and Informed Consent**

4. During the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle UPR Review of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the government agreed to "strengthen measures to ensure the participation of minorities in all spheres of national life."<sup>1</sup> This agreement arose in a country with a notionally federal system supposedly designed to ensure that the constituent peoples of Pakistan each have an equal say in the conduct and development of their economic, social and cultural lives. However, as the conclusions, recommendations and agreements deriving from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle UPR Review of Pakistan highlight, such federalism is not working in practice. The country is more appropriately characterized as having a heavily centralized system of governance that does not accord fundamental guarantees to peoples under international law, particularly regarding the right to land.
5. Such guarantees are enshrined in numerous international instruments, most notably:
  - Article 1 of both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) state that

"1. All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development. 2. All peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudice to any obligations arising out of international economic co-operation, based upon the principle of mutual benefit, and international law. In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence."

- Article 10 of the UN Declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples states that:

"Indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories. No relocation shall take place without the free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous peoples concerned and after agreement on just and fair compensation and, where possible, with the option of return."

6. Of note, in 2021, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights began a process, hopefully, to be finalized in 2022, to publish a new General Comment on the Right to Land.<sup>2</sup> The draft General Comment highlights that the right to land is enshrined in the IESCR, mainly through Articles 1, 2, 11 and 12. The Committee notes that "secure access to land is a precondition for the enjoyment of several rights under the Covenant" including the right to housing, right to adequate food, the right to water, and the right to partake in cultural life, and that states have a particular obligation to ensure against discrimination in land and development policy, guarantee participation, consultation and transparency, and to ensure land tenure rights, with a particular need to guarantee free, prior and informed consent of indigenous communities from any land takings. Furthermore, the Committee highlighted that there were specific extraterritorial obligations of investor states to ensure that no development projects that they or their citizens are funding in third countries violate basic principles such as the need for free, prior and informed consent.
7. Such obligations are routinely being violated by minority and indigenous communities in Pakistan regarding large-scale infrastructure development projects.<sup>3</sup> For example, in December 2019, the UNPO published a report, *A Tale of Three Ports: the Impact of the Belt and Road Initiative on Unrepresented Peoples in Pakistan and China*, that highlighted how the development of rail projects, including the development of the seaport in the city of Gwadar, Balochistan, are being made without the free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous communities whose lands are subjected to expropriation and development by these projects.<sup>4</sup>
8. Furthermore, in a complaint to the UN Independent Expert on foreign debt and human rights, the UNPO highlighted the "debt trap" engendered by foreign investment in Pakistan. This complaint highlighted that an already fragile economic development system, characterized by central government decision-making to exclude indigenous and local communities, was becoming ever more remote from these communities as decisions have begun being taken at the international rather than national level.<sup>5</sup>
9. This issue arises out of more than merely a constitutional question of the locus of decision-making but is instead driven by an intentional central government programme to exclude specific communities from the benefit of economic development in favour of others. This is evidenced, for example, by repression by Pakistani armed security forces, who carry out enforced disappearances and arrests framed under the "Anti-Terrorism Act" against those who seek to uphold their

indigenous rights. In addition, human rights defenders, activists and journalists speaking out against the Pakistani state's approach to economic advancement and industrialization<sup>6</sup> are targeted by Pakistani armed security personnel facing extra-judicial killings and enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, and torture.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, heavy militarization and the enforcement of state control on construction sites have been widely noticed in Sindh, Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan.

10. This is further evidenced by the status of the military in Pakistan's economic and political life. For instance, the commercial arm of the Pakistani army – Frontier Works Organisation, holds a share of 30% in the contract for the construction of Diamer Bhasha Dam in Gilgit-Baltistan.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, there have been traces of corruption between the Pakistani government and the military, with the army wanting to reclaim power from the civilian government.<sup>9</sup> Since the Afghan War in the 1980s, the civilian space in Pakistan has declined, and the military is reaching greater control over the years.<sup>10</sup>
11. As a result, of this programme of exclusion, the economic benefits of infrastructural projects flow into the hands of the government, favouring the province of Punjab in receiving most government spending. In contrast, other provinces are left without fair distribution of monetary funds.<sup>11</sup> For example, 75% of Sindhis live in poverty, although the province of Sindh produces approximately 70% of Pakistan's wealth.<sup>12</sup> Whereas of \$62billion of projects related to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, only 4.5% is going to the province of Balochistan.<sup>13</sup> In addition, the development projects built under CPEC are increasing Pakistan's economic reliance on China, with Pakistani taxpayers bearing the costs.<sup>14</sup>
12. Furthermore, the construction of mega infrastructure projects, particularly in connection with dam building on the Indus River, is further tied to environmental degradation. As a result, fragile environments deteriorate, causing ecological calamities to worsen. For example, while the Pakistani government is investing in different infrastructures in Sindh and Baluchistan province and Gilgit, the people in the area are left without adequate sewer or draining irrigation systems that could prevent mass flooding and, therefore also, health detriments.

### **III. Human Rights Violations Related to Infrastructure Development Projects**

13. The impacts of the denials of the right to self-determination and free, prior and informed consent are being felt across Pakistan by minority and indigenous communities, with particular effects being seen in Sindh.

#### **a. the right to land**

14. The construction of infrastructure development projects and commercially expensive housing development in the land of Sindh are tied to the unlawful expropriation and occupation of land for development and security purposes. For example, in 2020, a development project known as the Bahria Town construction in Sindh province was rendered illegal by the Sindh High Court.<sup>15</sup> However, 100 villages had already been forcibly relocated, and the land was occupied by then.
15. People from Sindh have been excluded from the decision-making process, infringing their right to life and development. Corruption plays a part in the construction of infrastructure projects, as

influential people are being consulted for program implementation and contractors have relationships with officers, showing a lack of transparency with the overall community.<sup>16</sup>

16. Many illegal land occupations and development constructions are connected to the forced displacement of the local population, with resentment from the people on the ground, claiming severe environmental and heritage damage. For example, in the Diamer district in Gilgit-Baltistan, around the mountain peak of Nanga Parbat, 4,200 families have been displaced,<sup>17</sup> and up to 50,000 people are said to have to leave to make room for the Diamer Basha Dam.<sup>18</sup> Residents of the area fear that the million-old cultural heritage site of the engraved rocks in Chilas valley in Gilgit-Baltistan, along the Indus river, will be destroyed and soon vanish if construction continues.<sup>19</sup> The building of the dam is being opposed not only by the Gilgit-Baltistan community but also by the Sindh. They live downstream of the Indus river.
17. Since 2018 the Fisherfolk Forum in Sindh and Balochistan (indigenous population) have raised their concerns over losing their ancestral land and being marginalized in their freedom to access their land and water. Fishing is the source of life for the Sindhis in Karachi and Baluch in Gwadar, as they follow it as a tradition and a source of income. However, commercial fishing companies have increased trawling in the area, and Chinese trawlers were issued licenses. At the same time, people from Karachi and Gwadar are prohibited from fishing.<sup>20</sup> Thus their source of income recedes, and they do not have other jobs or educational opportunities.
18. Furthermore, many land expropriations are conducted without adequate compensation to the lawful occupants. For example, in Karachi, the capital of Sindh, over the past four years, 17,500 acres of high-quality land have been allotted to the military at a fraction of the market cost. Further, over the past few years, more than 24,000 acres of the indigenous homeland of the Sindh, in and around Karachi (Capital of Sindh), were sold at a low price to private developers.<sup>21</sup>
19. Currently, the federal government of Pakistan is attempting to annex and centralize Bundal and Buddo islands off the coast of Karachi for development purposes and to construct a new city on the island. This was opposed in early 2022,<sup>22</sup> with the Sindh forest department declaring the island's property of Sindh province. This decision is, however, awaiting approval from the provincial cabinet.<sup>23</sup>

## **b. the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment**

20. The construction of mega projects is additionally tied to environmental degradation, threatening the biodiversity of the lands, a direct violation of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment (HRC/RES/48/13). According to a report by the WorldBank and the Asian Development Bank, Pakistan "faces some the highest disaster risk levels in the world".<sup>24</sup> The environmental challenges faced by Pakistan are being worsened through massive CO2 emissions and resource extractions in connection with mega infrastructure projects.<sup>25</sup> The local population is carrying consequences. Not only are the environments of the regions in question endangered, but the health of the people living in those areas has become severely impacted by the decline of the natural biodiversity of the lands. The Pakistani government is risking its people's health and violating various international human rights treaties it has ratified.<sup>26</sup>
21. Diamer Bhasha Dam is said to be constructed in a high seismic zone in the Himalayans. Therefore, the environment is extremely fragile, and the dam will accelerate glacier melting and landslides.<sup>27</sup>

As a result, the district of Diamer in Gilgit-Baltistan is being met with flash floods, leaving the population homeless, as 1.5000 acres of land in the district are already unable to inhabit and farm on.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, the construction of Diamer Basha is further impacting 50.000 people environmentally, including 31 villages in the area, spanning over 37.000 acres of land.<sup>29</sup> The reservoir area is said to span a total of 200 sq. km.<sup>30</sup>

22. The impact of the Diamer dam construction is further affecting people in Sindh. Any structures concerning water diversion upstream threaten to dry out the Indus River.<sup>31</sup> The Indus River used to have a natural rhythm through glacier melting rains, groundwater and snow melt. Due to damming upstream, water is being led into reservoirs, creating artificial water shortages downstream in the indigenous land of Sindh.<sup>32</sup> Thus impacting the local fishery, agricultural sector and the trade industry, which are all directly dependent on the water sustained from the Indus River. The disappearing of local sources of food is impacting 70million people that will suffer through a famine-like situation should the Indus River run dry.<sup>33</sup>
23. Water shortages are an acute threat to life for the people of Sindh.<sup>34</sup> Should the Indus dry out, not only the industries of Sindh will cease to exist,<sup>35</sup> but as a result, the people will be unable to sustain and practice their traditions. Sindhis have raised concern that this will cause the eradication of their people and their culture.<sup>36</sup> This violates Article 27 of the ICCPR, ratified by Pakistan in 2010.<sup>37</sup>
24. The lack of access to fresh groundwater is a severe health concern in Sindh province, as kidney and liver diseases rise due to groundwater contamination.<sup>38</sup> Groundwater becomes contaminated through high levels of arsenic present in the water, accompanied by uncontrolled dumping of toxic waste into the Indus River and its tributaries.<sup>39</sup> They are impacting the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.<sup>40</sup> Over 60 million people in 2017 consumed contaminated groundwater in the Indus Basin.<sup>41</sup> The local opposition leader in Sindh mentions that 85% of Sindhi have to drink water contaminated with sewage waste.<sup>42</sup>
25. Water shortages are a substantial issue for the province of Sindh. However, the fragile environment is also affected by the heavy flooding of the Indus Delta, impacting mostly Sindh. This occurs through water intrusion from the Arabian Sea, as damming has caused the loss of silt and sand within the Indus River.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, the construction of additional dams, such as the hydropower dam of Diamer Basha and diversion canals, can worsen the problem, as the Sindh community fears a total submersion of the region.<sup>44</sup> Since 1984 approximately 96 acres per day have already been lost underneath 40km of sea.<sup>45</sup>
26. The August 2020 flash floods in Karachi, Sindh, have claimed 47 deaths out of the 80 in the Sindh district.<sup>46</sup> Megaprojects and urban development planning ignore that Karachi has insufficient drainage and waste management, which are significant reasons why cities in Pakistan experience flooding of this severity.<sup>47</sup> Corruption within the Sindh government and political power struggles leaves the people of Karachi vulnerable. Furthermore, people in Karachi suffer from noise, air pollution, and high carbon emission levels, affecting tens of thousands of people yearly.<sup>48</sup> Coal plants in the province create a poor quality of air, which can, over time, result in different lung diseases, such as asthma or even heart attacks.<sup>49</sup>
27. Additionally, flooding can be seen in Baluchistan province. In 2019, unexpected flash floods displaced up to 300 people in Turbat district, 1500 in Lasbella district and 8000 people in Pishin

district.<sup>50</sup> Although floods are a natural occurrence, the mismanagement of the province, and poor flood management alongside the construction of infrastructure projects, particularly the expansion of Gwadar-Port, are worsening the situation.<sup>51</sup>

28. The Gwadar Development Authority (GDA), the government sector in charge of implementing development projects in Gwadar, have neglected to work on drainage and sewerage systems that could help ease the flooding. In addition, the area's local population, including experts on urban development, geologist researchers and activists, are not being consulted in the construction of development projects.<sup>52</sup>
29. In the greater Baluchistan province, flash floods leave people without adequate healthcare facilities and clean drinking water as water, vector, and joint diseases rise.<sup>53</sup> As a result, the health outlook for people in marginalized communities looks grim. Children, in particular, are carrying the burden of sickness and diseases. For example, in Baluchistan, only 29% of children are fully immunized at 24 months.<sup>54</sup>

### **c. the right to liberty (incl. Prohibition of arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances)**

30. Article 9 of the ICCPR has been repeatedly violated by Pakistan's government and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), ratified by Pakistan on June 23rd 2010.<sup>55</sup>
31. The practice of enforced disappearances by state agents, targeting activists, human rights defenders, journalists and students, has been widespread in Pakistan since 2001. There have been over 8000 cases of enforced disappearances reported since 2011, with only 3,284 of the people returned, according to the Islamabad High Court (IHC).<sup>56</sup> Cases of enforced disappearances have often been justified under the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA), a common practice used by the Pakistani army to arrest people.<sup>57</sup>
32. The heavy militarization and the enforcement of state control on construction sites of infrastructures and development projects have been widely noticed in Sindh, Baluchistan province<sup>58</sup> and Diamer District of Gilgit-Baltistan, as well as around other areas of the upper Indus River region. Notably, the heavily protected Diamer-Basha Dam construction site contributes to Jammu and Kashmir's rising geopolitical tensions.<sup>59</sup>
33. Minorities and indigenous people voicing their concerns and being outspoken against the human rights violations committed against them in connection to Pakistan's infrastructure development have to fear repression.<sup>60</sup> Specifically, enforced disappearances and extra-judicial killings are commonly used practices targeting Sindh and Baluchi individuals.<sup>61</sup> Particularly people of Sindh & Baluchistan, who critique CPEC, fall victim to enforced disappearances. The Pakistani government is violating the Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance (A/Res/47/133) and its constitution of Article 9.<sup>62</sup>
34. On June 6<sup>th</sup>, after a peaceful protest in Sindh against the vast land-grabbing schemes by the Pakistani army, thousands of houses were raided, with multiple hundred people, including human



rights defenders, writers, poets, displaced indigenous people and workers of Sindh arbitrary arrested under "anti-terrorism" cases.<sup>63</sup>

35. In the first six months of 2022, around 78 people of Sindh origin have disappeared and 351 Baluchs. In the case of enforced disappearances in Baluchistan, 80 people have been victims of extra-judicial killing by the state.<sup>64</sup> Those found are often dead, with their bodies showing signs of torture.<sup>65</sup>

## IV. Recommendations

36. Given the above-mentioned human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation (UNPO) and the World Sindhi Congress (WSC) urge the Pakistani government to consider the following recommendations:

- Allow for an international fact-finding mission to Pakistan to assess the state's practices of illegal occupation of land, underground and surface water issues, seawater intrusion, and water appropriations through the construction of megastructures on the River Indus in Sindh and Balochistan.
- Ensure the participation of minorities and indigenous people in all spheres of national life, including through procedures that uphold their rights to self-determination, including the right to free-prior and informed consent over land development projects.
- Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the land expropriation policies in Pakistan, including an investigation of individual instances, such as the situation of indigenous people in Sindh (100's villages) who are displaced under the Bahria Town Development Schemes and many more military-owned housing schemes in Sindh.
- Conduct a commission of inquiry into internationally-funded development projects, such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, including participation from all affected communities to determine how such projects can be better managed in the future.
- Provide adequate means of redress for communities who have been subjected to illegal expropriation or who have been inadequately compensated for expropriation, including through the return of lands to those who have been subjected to forced relocation following expropriations subsequently ruled illegal.
- Conduct fulsome environmental impact assessments of development projects, cease the construction of mega projects in fragile environments, specifically in Gilgit-Baltistan and on and around the Indus River in Sindh province, which could potentially harm the biodiversity and the people of the regions.
- Allocate the development funds it receives for infrastructure and land projects to provide upgraded water and sewer irrigation systems that do not let harmful toxins or waste flow into the natural groundwater surrounding development projects, such as in Sindh.
- Take measures to strengthen the public health system, particularly in Sindh, where people are predominantly affected by air and water pollution, in line with the commitment during the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle to "allocate sufficient resources to strengthen public health, aiming to provide affordable and quality basic medical services."

- Ensure freedom of expression and assembly is respected by refraining from excessive use of force against protesters, particularly journalists, students, activists and community members of the Sindh and the Baluch.
- Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances.

# Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Recommendation 152.183 UPR of Pakistan 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle - 28<sup>th</sup> session
- <sup>2</sup> See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input/2021/call-written-contributions-draft-general-comment-no-26-land-and-economic>
- <sup>3</sup> See UNPO 01.04.2022 “A Tale of Three Ports”, p. 8. Available at: <https://unpo.org/article/21808>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]; See UNPO 20.02.2018 “Breaking the Silence”, p. 22. Available at: <https://unpo.org/article/20635>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]
- <sup>4</sup> UNPO, *A Tale of Three Ports: the Impact of the Belt and Road Initiative on Unrepresented Peoples in Pakistan and China* (December 2019) available at <https://unpo.org/downloads/2590.pdf>
- <sup>5</sup> UNPO, *Violations of minority and indigenous rights in Pakistan caused by foreign debt financed projects along the so-called China-Pakistan Economic Corridor* (January 2022) available at <https://unpo.org/downloads/2742.pdf>.
- <sup>6</sup> See UNPO 20.02.2018 “Breaking the Silence”, p. 22. Available at: <https://unpo.org/article/20635>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]; UNPO Interview 24.05.2022; UNPO 01.04.2022 “A Tale of Three Ports”, p. 11. Available at: <https://unpo.org/article/21808>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022];
- <sup>7</sup> idem
- <sup>8</sup> UNPO Interview 24.05.2022
- <sup>9</sup> See Arif Rafiwi 26.10.2020 “The Pakistan Army’s Belt and Road Putsch”. Available at: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/08/26/the-pakistan-armys-belt-and-road-putsch/>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]
- <sup>10</sup> See Shamil Shams 24.09.2020 “Amid civilian-military conflict, does Pakistan need a new social contract?”. Available at: <https://www.dw.com/en/amid-civilian-military-conflict-does-pakistan-need-a-new-social-contract/a-55029526>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]
- <sup>11</sup> UNPO Interview 23.03.2022; see EFSAS “The New Great Game: China’s Debt-Trap Diplomacy. Available at: <https://www.efsas.org/publications/study-papers/the-new-great-game-chinas-debt-trap-diplomacy/>. [Last accessed: ] 11.07.2022
- <sup>12</sup> See UNPO 20.02.2018 “Breaking the Silence”, p. 27. Available at: <https://unpo.org/article/20635>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]; See UNPO Member Profile: Sindh. Available at: <https://unpo.org/downloads/2371.pdf>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]
- <sup>13</sup> See Gulalai Ismail and Alvin Camba 29.05.2022 “China’s BRI Is Aggravating Ethnic Tensions in the Global South”. Available at: <https://thediplomat.com/2022/05/chinas-bri-is-aggravating-ethnic-tensions-in-the-global-south/>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022 ]
- <sup>14</sup> See UNPO 20.02.2018 “Breaking the Silence”, p. 28. Available at: <https://unpo.org/article/20635>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]; See UNPO 31.01.2022 “UNPO Submits Complaint to UN on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor”, p.2. Available at: <https://unpo.org/article/22184>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]; UNPO Interview 16.03.2022
- <sup>15</sup> See Ishaq Tanoli 22.07.2020 “All construction activities in Bahria Town Karachi are illegal, SBCA tells SHC. Available at: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1570355>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]
- <sup>16</sup> idem
- <sup>17</sup> See NS Energy “Diامر Basha Dam Hydropower Project”. Available at: <https://www.nsenergybusiness.com/projects/diامر-bhasha-dam-hydropower-project/>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]
- <sup>18</sup> See Qmar-uz-Zaman 08.07.2020 “Pakistan breaks ground for dream dam project at Diامر”. Available at: <https://www.thethirdpole.net/en/energy/pakistan-breaks-ground-for-dream-dam-project-at-diامر/>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]
- <sup>19</sup> See Shabina Faraz 06.08.2020 “Pakistan’s Diامر Basha dam will drown ancient carvings”. Available at: <https://www.thethirdpole.net/en/culture/pakistans-diامر-basha-dam-will-drown-ancient-carvings/>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]
- <sup>20</sup> See Behram Baloch 16.06.2021 “Gwadar fishermen hold rally against grant of fishing rights to Chinese trawlers”. Available at: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1629558>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]; See The Balochistan Post 06.03.2021 “Gwadar: Local fisherment protest against the rampant trawling on the coast”. Available at: <https://thebalochistanpost.net/2021/03/gwadar-local-fishermen-protest-against-the-rampant-trawling-on-the-coast/>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]
- <sup>21</sup> See World Sindhi Congress
- <sup>22</sup> See Tahir Siddiqui 03.02.2022 “Ownership dispute deepens as Sindh declares two islands protected area”. Available at: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1672943>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]
- <sup>23</sup> See Faiza Ilyas 14.02.2022 “Notification to declare Bundal, Buddo island protected forests still awaited”. Available at: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1674999>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]

- 24 See WorldBank Group and Asian Development Bank 2021“Climate Risk Country Profile: Pakistan”. Available at: [https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/15078-WB\\_Pakistan%20Country%20Profile-WEB.pdf](https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/15078-WB_Pakistan%20Country%20Profile-WEB.pdf). [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]
- 25 See Kouser, S., Subhan, A. & Abedullah Uncovering Pakistan’s Environmental Risks and Remedies under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. *Environ Sci Pollut Res* 27, 4661–4663 (2020), p. 4662. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11356-019-07428-5>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]
- 26 e.g. The International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, Art. 12, which Pakistan ratified in 2008. Further, Pakistan is also violating other human rights treaties ratified, which protect women and children and their right to health. Examples are the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Article 5 (e) (iv); Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Article 11(1) (f), 12, and 14 (2) (b); Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 25; as well as Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 24.2
- 27 See UNPO 20.02.2018 “Breaking the Silence”, p. 24. Available at: <https://unpo.org/article/20635>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]
- 28 UNPO Interview 24.05.2022
- 29 See Qmar-uz-Zaman 08.07.2020 “Pakistan breaks ground for dream dam project at Diامر”. Available at: <https://www.thethirdpole.net/en/energy/pakistan-breaks-ground-for-dream-dam-project-at-diامر/>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]
- 30 See Hassan Abbas and Ashgar Hussain 05.11.2021 “Opinion: Pakistan’s Diامر Basha dam is neither green nor cheap”. Available at: <https://www.thethirdpole.net/en/energy/pakistans-diامر-bhasha-dam-neither-green-nor-cheap/>. [Last accessed: 11.07.2022]
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