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National Conference - “Linking Human Rights and Pakistan SDGs Agenda 2030: Leaving No One Behind”

To celebrate **Human Rights Day (10th December)**, Parliamentarian Commission for Human Rights in collaboration with Peace & Justice Network (PJN) and the National Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs has organized a national conference **“Linking Human Rights and Pakistan SDGs Agenda 2030 – Leaving No One Behind”** on 9th December, 2019 at Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) auditorium.

Honourable Mr. Qasim Khan Suri (Deputy Speaker), Honourable Mr. Riaz Fatyana (Chairperson National Parliamentary Task-force on SDGs and NA Standing Committee on Law), Ch. Muhammad Shafiq (ED PCHR), Barrister Sarwar Khan (CEO JCfROL and former Secretary LJCP), Syed Raza Ali (CEO PJN), Ms. Kashmala Tariq (Federal Ombudsperson), Ms. Mehnaz Akber Aziz MNA, Mr. Farhat Ullah Babar (former Senator), Ms. Nafeesa Khattak (MNA) and other Honourable dignitaries reaffirm their commitment for a just, inclusive and peaceful Pakistan where rights of every individual is secure. National Assembly’s Deputy Speaker Qasim Suri, while speaking to participants of the seminar, said that parliament is the custodian of human rights and it should ensure human rights in the country.

The purpose of this event was to explore inter linkages between the SDGs and related human Rights obligations and standards in implementing the Pakistan 2030 Agenda.

During the event, PJN and PCHR has also launched the first ever human rights award for parliamentarians to recognize their contribution for the promotion of Human Rights in Pakistan. Those who received the awards included MNAs Nafeesa Khattak (PTI), Mahnaz Aziz (PTI), Nafisa Shah (PPP), ombudsperson Kashmala Tariq and former PPP senator Farhatullah Babar.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Babar said human rights were under siege everywhere and more so in Pakistan and it was the shared duty of all to help improve the rights situation. “Let us stand for human rights for everyone, everywhere and every time.” He said the frontiers of human rights were constantly expanding and what was a privilege yesterday was a right today like education, health and right to information. He called upon the PJN and PCHR to move a resolution in the National Assembly for the restoration of student unions and withdrawal of cases against those who participated in the recent Students Solidarity March. The Senate and the Sindh Assembly have already done so, he said.

National Assembly Standing Committee on Law and Justice Chairman Riaz Fatyana said 92pc targets of the sustainable development goals were related to human rights. “There are 17 goals of SDGs and 169 targets. Out of them, 156 targets are human rights related. We cannot progress without rule of law,” he said. PCHR Executive Director Chaudhry Shafique said basic human rights needed to be ensured across

the country. “If we want to progress we need to make sure that everyone should be treated equally and there would be no discrimination on the basis of caste, race and gender,” he said.

Barrister Sarwar Khan, Advisor Peace & Justice Network (Former Secretary Law & Justice Commission of Pakistan) highlighted the importance of right to equality and need for human rights based approach for sustainable development.

During the occasion, Peace & Justice Network has also launched human rights day song “[Promise of Pakistan – Pakistan Ka Wada](#)”.

Event was attended by parliamentarians, representatives of ministries, government officials, officials from embassies, UN bodies, lawyers, media and civil society representatives and experts.