

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Parliamentarians are committed and dedicated to the cause of human rights in Pakistan**

Islamabad. PCHR Steering Committee meeting held on 19th April 2006 in Room No. 114 of the Chamber of Tourism Minister at Parliament House Islamabad. The steering committee members which include Dr. G.G. Jamal Federal Minister for Tourism and Secretary General PCHR, Director PCHR, Ex senator & Minister of State for Interior Dr. Shehzad Waseem, Dr. Fareed Ahmed Paracha MNA, Ms. Mehnaz Raffi MNA, Ms. Riffat Javed Kahlon MNA, Senator Mir Naseer Khan Mengal, Minister of State for Petroleum, Khawaja Saad Rafique MNA, Syed Javed Ali Shah MNA, Ms. Fauzia Wahab MNA and Chief Coordinator PCHR Mr. Shafique Chaudhry attended the meeting. The meeting was presided over by the Chairman PCHR Mr. Riaz Fatyana MNA. Giving detail of the meeting Chief Coordinator Mr. Shafique Chaudhry said that the Steering committee reviewed the administrative and organizational matters of the commission as well as overall role of PCHR in protection and promotion of human rights in the country. They expressed their complete satisfaction over it and took many decisions for future program.

In the meeting, General Secretary PCHR Dr. G.G. Jamal said that he is no longer in position to allocate necessary time to PCHR as secretary general due to his ministerial engagements. Conceding to his genuine standpoint, the committee agreed that the new secretary general should be appointed. The committee admitted Secretary General Dr. G.G. Jamal has excellently and forcefully presented PCHR in all forums and it is due to his untiring efforts that PCHR has emerged as forceful human rights protective organization within three years in the country. Afterwards, all the members of the committee unanimously appointed Parliamentary Secretary Syed Javed Ali Shah MNA the new Secretary General of PCHR. Steering Committee also reshuffled in other executive designations of PCHR and appointed Ex. Senator & Minister of State for Interior Dr. Shehzad Waseem as Executive Director while the incumbent Executive Director Ms. Kashmala Tariq MNA is promoted as Additional Secretary General of PCHR respectively. During the meeting, members PCHR were of the opinion that some human rights issues demanding urgent legislation which include labour issues, gender equality, prisons reforms and access to justice. To formulate legal framework, the committee decided to put four bills in the parliament which include IRO 2002, Gender Justice Bill, Prison Reforms and Law Reform Package. All the members unanimously resolved that these bills will be put forward in Executive Council of PCHR wherefrom, after approval, they will be submitted in the parliament.

Member PCHR Khawaja Saad Rafique MNA diverted the attention of all the members of Steering Committee towards the state of affairs in Adyala Jail and termed the plight of the prisoners to be worst and battered. Upon this, the members of the committee asked the Chief Coordinator Mr. Shafique Chaudhry to communicate with the district Nazim of Rawalpindi Raja Javed Ekhlas and Advisor to Chief Minister Punjab Raja Muhammed Nasir to seek coordination of the provincial government on this issue. It was also decided in the meeting that next week, to monitor the current situation of prisons in Pakistan, members PCHR which include MNAs and Senators will pay various visits to the many prisons including the Adyala Jail; and will propose comprehensive reforms package so as to fine-tune the prison system in lines with human rights model.

Chief Coordinator Mr. Shafique Chaudhry called the meeting fruitful and added that decisions taken in the meeting not only indicates the democratically working of PCHR but shows the commitment and dedication of parliamentarians with the noble cause of human rights in Pakistan.

Following numbers will be reachable round the clock for any information or help:  
0300-8555570

Media Cell PCHR