

Pakistan: UN must probe massacre of 97 persons including 63 lawyers in Quetta (Balochistan)

Tuesday 9 August 2016, by [AHRC](#) (Date first published: 9 August 2016).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AHRC-STM-120-2016

9 August, 2016

A Statement by the Asian Human Rights Commission

PAKISTAN: UN must probe massacre of 97 persons including 63 lawyers by in the bomb attack on a hospital in Quetta

The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), joins everyone who is shocked and dismayed by the senseless and brutal attack on civilians which according to the Balochistan Bar Association, has killed 97 persons which includes 63 lawyers, two journalists a photographer of Dawn and Aaj News channels, and injured more than 120 persons including women and children. The attack preceded the assassination of the President of the Bar Association of Balochistan, Mr Bilal Anwar Kansi who called for a boycott of the Balochistan Courts, in solidarity of another lawyer who was assassinated two days before.

The massacre took place when a large crowd including many lawyers have gathered to pay respects to the assassinated President of the Bar Association.

The lawyers have been at the forefront of a campaign demanding the government to take effective action against those who are involved with violence in the region which has involved also the assassination of many persons. During the past recent months, there had been constant acts of violence disturbing the peace and the stability in the area.

This attack is one of the worst massacres which has taken place in Balochistan, in Pakistan. Prior to the attack there had been calls on the military and the government to play a more positive role in suppressing terrorism in the area and to ensure security. However, both the military and the government has failed to take any special action despite of constant reports of violence and the causing of disturbances in the area. Clearly, the government has failed in its duty to protect the people and to maintain the rule of law.

Immediately following the massacre the military according to reports, has authorised the intelligence services to make arrests as they wish throughout the country. Obvious results of this would be the arrest of many innocent persons and given the previous record in these areas it would not be surprising if many enforced disappearances and extra judicial killings, would take place in the aftermath of this massacre.

What the government has to do at this crucial moment is to use all its resources to ensure a proper inquiry into the incident on the one hand and on the other to provide relief and security to the

victims of this massacre. The Prime Minister and the Cabinet should take control of the situation and ensure that in the aftermath of this massacre, the military and the intelligence service would act with restraint.

Given the massive number of killings it is very unlikely that Pakistan investigating services would be willing and capable to carry out a credible investigation. The sheer incompetence of the investigating agencies in Pakistan is one of the major causes for intensification of violence in many parts of Pakistan including Balochistan. Therefore, it would be appropriate for the United Nations to intervene in order to ensure that the situation is brought under control and that a proper inquiry would be held into this massacre.

In the aftermath of this massacre which has killed among others 63 lawyers, which is perhaps the largest number of lawyers ever killed in a single incident in the recent history anywhere in the world, we call upon the Bar Associations all over the world, to take an active part in coming to the defence of the lawyers of Balochistan. In all likelihood there would be a tremendous paralysis in the functioning of the legal system and the courts as a result of the killing of these lawyers. It is also quite natural that the remaining members of the legal fraternity is in a state of anxiety about the future of the professional in the region. Under these circumstances legal fraternity throughout the world has an obligation to come to the assistance of lawyers in Balochistan at this hour of their need.

Asian Human Rights Commission
