

# **Report on Seminar & Orientation Workshop Organized by Pakistan Council for Social Welfare & Human Rights (PCSW&HR) to Celebrate the World Interfaith Harmony Week 2012**

As the UN General Assembly unanimously passed a resolution to recognize the World Interfaith Harmony Week annually during the first week of February. During the 1<sup>st</sup> week of February 2012 the world celebrated 2<sup>nd</sup> world interfaith harmony week through out the world. With the strong motivation of Ms. Monica Willard URI Representative at UN, Pakistan Council for Social Welfare & Human Rights (PCSW&HR) also actively participated to celebrate the world interfaith harmony week. To celebrate this week PCSW&HR organized various awareness activities in which seminar at Social Welfare Services Complex Sialkot on the topic "Interfaith & Intercultural Harmony is Essential to Secure Peace" on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2012 and Orientation workshop at Govt. School Ajowali on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2012 for the community based groups formed by PCSW&HR at village level were main activities.

In the seminar and orientation workshop hundreds of believer (both male & female) of different faiths in which Muslims, Christians, Hindus etc participated. The main focus of seminar was to campaigning for the importance of harmonious life among believers of different faiths and orientation workshop was to orientate the youth members of community based groups and teachers from education department on the importance of interfaith harmony and role of youth to sensitize the local community for the promotion of interfaith & intercultural harmony as well distribute the appreciate certificate among the those members did the marvelous work at grass root level for interfaith & intercultural harmony, peace and justice.



**Mr. Muhammad Ijaz Noori Chairman PCSWHR, Mr. Mushtaq Ahmed Qadri and Ch. Muhammad Ijaz Directors PCSWHR during the Seminar**

Bishop of Sialkot Rt. Rev. Samuel Pervaz Dioceses of Sialkot Church of Pakistan presided over the seminar at Sialkot. Mr. Muhammad Ijaz Noori Chairman PCSW&HR and Member Provincial Assembly & Chairman Standing Committee for Health Govt. of Punjab Mr. Tahir Mehmood Hundli Advocate were chief guests at Seminar. Hundred of men and women belonging from different faiths participated in the seminar. In his welcoming address Mr. Mansoor Ahmed Executive Director PCSW&HR welcomed the all participants of seminar and highlighted the perspective of celebration of world interfaith harmony week through out the world in detail. He said that in his point of view in the present scenario terrorism is burning issue of the world and we can only tackle terrorism with the promoting of inter-faith harmony, mutual understanding, religious tolerance and inter religious dialogue.



**A view of female participants during the seminar organized by PCSWHR to celebrate the world interfaith harmony week 2012**



**A view of male participants during the seminar organized by PCSWHR to celebrate the world interfaith harmony week 2012**



He further said that goal of the interfaith week is to recognize the crucial need for dialogue among different faiths and religions in enhancing mutual understanding, harmony and cooperation among people. We should learn to live together in mutual trust and peace. While addressing during the seminar Mr. Noori highlighted the importance of promoting of educational programmes on interfaith harmony & peace in schools, colleges, universities and among the general public as well as among the religious leaders. He said that programmes to enhance conflict resolution skills should be introduced in order to effectively resolve regional and national conflicts. He added that it is good opportunity for us when we are observing the world interfaith harmony week with international community to aware the general public regarding the importance of inter religious & intercultural harmony and dialogues. Islam and all other religions give the message of peace, mutual respect, understanding, protection of fundamental human rights and as part of a globalization of culture, these truths of all religions should be highlighted and put into a wider and more existing social context. He also briefed the participants about the PCSW&HR's initiatives as cooperation circle of United Religion Initiative for the promotion of interfaith & intercultural harmony, conflict resolution mutual respect, peace and justice etc at grass root level.

While addressing during the seminar Chief Guest Mr. Tahir Mehmood Hundli Advocate Member Provincial Assembly and Chairman standing committee health Govt. of Punjab appreciated the efforts of PCSW&HR to celebrate the world interfaith harmony week and organizing a wonderful seminar to aware the people regarding the importance of interfaith & intercultural harmony. He further said that it is also moral obligation of religious & political leaders and government officials to play their role to end prejudice and stop religious violence in their individual and collective capacity. Religious and intercultural harmony and dialogues is need of hour, no doubt dialogue can bring us mutual improvement and help us overcome prejudices passed on to us by previous generations.



**Chairman PCSWHR Muhammad Ijaz Noori, Member Provincial Assembly Tahir Mehmood Hundali and Bishop of Sialkot Rt. Rev. Samuel Pervaz addressing during the Seminar**

He lauded the efforts and commitment of Pakistan Council for Social Welfare & Human Rights to produce a culture of harmony among peoples of various religious faiths, civilizations and cultural backgrounds as well as promotion of intercultural and inter-civilisational understanding and mutual respect for diversity in Pakistan. On behalf of Government she assured his full support and cooperation to Pakistan Council for Social Welfare & Human Rights to initiate the steps for inter-religious & intercultural harmony, dialogues, understanding etc. While speaking during the seminar Bishop of Sialkot Rt. Rev. Samuel Pervaz Dioceses of Sialkot Church of Pakistan said that Christian are living in a huge numbers and through the platform of Pakistan Council for Social Welfare & Human Rights we are jointly trying for the promotion of interfaith & intercultural harmony and protection of minorities rights since long time and due to sincere efforts of PCSW&HR there is no concept of majority or minorities in Sialkot area, religious & cultural relations between Muslims & Christian are growing deeper and deeper which is unique example of interfaith & intercultural harmony. We will also try our best to create such kind of religious & intercultural harmony in the other parts of Pakistan where Christian and others minorities are living. Speakers from all religions also urged for inter-religious harmony & dialogues. All participants of seminar also pledged that they will play their role in their individual as well as collective capacity to create a inter- religious and intercultural harmony and peace and will support the PCSWHR's efforts for peace. During the seminar Questions answers session was also arranged, participants of seminar raised different questions regarding interfaith harmony.

During the seminar at Sialkot children also presented the tableau with the spotlight that first we all are human beings and then follower of any religion we should respect and tolerate each other.



**Children of Social Welfare Services Complex are presenting the Tableau during the seminar**



Pakistan Council for Social Welfare & Human Rights also organized an orientation workshop at village Ajowali Sialkot for those village level community based groups established by PCSW&HR at various villages on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2012.

The purpose of that orientation workshop was to orientate the members of community based groups on the importance of interfaith & intercultural harmony, peace, justice and religious tolerance. Members of these community-based groups (male & female) and teachers from education department participated in the orientation workshop. PCSW&HR Chairman Muhammad Ijaz Noori and executive members of PCSW&HR also attend that orientation workshop as Resource persons and highlighted the importance of interfaith and intercultural harmony especially in the present scenario when Pakistani nation is fighting against terrorists and extremists.



**Chairman PCSW&HR Muhammad Ijaz Noori addressing during the orientation workshop organized by PCSW&HR**



**Mrs. Sumera Executive Body member PCSW&HR addressing during the orientation workshop organized by PCSW&HR**

Participants of orientation workshop urged that they should play their role to sensitize the local community to create the culture of inter-religious, intercultural harmony, tolerance, peace, & justice and mutual respect. During the seminar all speakers highlighted the importance of inter-religious harmony, mutual respect and religious tolerance to secure the peace and to tackle the terrorism & extremism.



**A view of appreciation certificate distribution during the workshop**



**A view of appreciation certificate distribution during the workshop**

While during the harmony week from 1 – 7 February on the request of Pakistan Council for Social Welfare & Human Rights special prayers were also offered to prevail peace on earth in the mosques and churches of Sialkot area and religious leaders also highlighted the importance of inter-religious & intercultural harmony in their religious speeches. In various schools of Sialkot area awareness walks by the children were also organized and



children lighting the candles during the walks for peace on earth. National Newspapers also highlighted the activities organized by Pakistan Council for Social Welfare & Human Rights to celebrate the world interfaith harmony week 2012.



Children are lighting the candles for peace after the awareness Walk at one of school to celebrate the world interfaith harmony week 2012

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