

Statement by Mehran Baluch, Balochistan representative to the United Nations Human Rights Council, August 30, 2011

I appreciate the efforts of the American Friends of Balochistan for organizing the International Day of the Disappeared. I understand the A.F.B. considers Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri as the main icon of the independence struggle. Nawab Marri is my father but more importantly he is looked upon as a father by the overwhelming majority of the Baloch people.

After yeoman sacrifices, the trail of blood and tears in Balochistan is slowly but gradually being noticed in the United States. I thank Carlotta Gall of the New York Times for her brilliant report about Brahumdagh Bugti who is like a brother to me. Earlier in the month, I had welcomed the Human Rights Watch (HRW) report entitled **"We can torture, kill and keep you for years"**, a three-part series of investigations on Balochistan. The HRW report correctly points out that hundreds of political activists are being held and tortured by Pakistani security forces without charge in Balochistan and many of the victims of enforced disappearances are tortured and executed with impunity. The 132-page HRW report is based on 100 interviews carried out in 2010 and 2011 with relatives of the those forcibly disappeared.

I also commend Mr. Sam Zarifi and Ms. Maya Pastakia of the Amnesty International, London, for their two reports on the kill-and-dump policy in Balochistan in the last nine or so months.

I note with sadness Islamabad has rejected the findings of the HRW and Amnesty International reports without caring to look into them. Pakistan army generals, who call the shots in the country, are today are in the same state of denial in Balochistan like the genocide of three million Bengalis during the 1971 Bangladesh war of liberation. The toothless provincial government in Quetta has no powers. When Governor Zulfikar Ali Magsi did the only good thing of his tenure and publicly complained to the military chief general Ashfaq Kayani about the enforced disappearances in Balochistan earlier this year, Pakistani soldiers began killing the Baloch youth and political activists who were victims of enforced disappearances at a faster rate than ever before.

Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani and Interior Minister Rehman Malik, both from Punjab like the Pakistan military, made false proclamations of a so-called political package in Balochistan while the execution of victims of enforced disappearances on the horrific scale that is happening in Balochistan today is unprecedented in the history of my blood-checked homeland.

I appeal to human rights practitioners and media in the United States to put Balochistan on their daybook to help end the genocidal situation there.