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Sindhi-Americans Gathered in Houston to Pay Tribute to their National Leader

Houston Mayor Bill White proclaims G M Syed Day

*Texas Governor Rick Perry Applauds Role of Sindhis in Promoting Peace and
Human Rights*

Hundreds of Sindhi-Americans gathered on Sunday January 16, 2005, in Houston to commemorate the 101st birthday of Mr. G. M. Syed, a national leader of the Sindhi people who waged a nonviolent struggle against Islamic fundamentalism, and for the freedom of Sindh. Sindh is home to the ancient Indus Valley Civilization and is now a province in Pakistan. A vibrant Sindhi-American community numbering in the tens of thousands lives in various cities of USA.

More than 30 million Sindhis live in Sindh today. Sindhis are supportive of democracy and secularism and have been marginalized by Pakistan's military dictatorship and its Islamist ideology.

Honorable Rick Perry, Governor State of Texas sent special greetings on this occasion. In his message, the Governor said:

Sindhi-Americans continue to play an important role in promoting peace, democracy, and human rights. By putting thought into action, you have reinforced the importance of being civic-minded, committed citizens, and I wish you continued success.

Bill White, Mayor of Houston, Texas, proclaimed the January 16, 2005 as “*G M Syed Day for the City of Houston.*” City Councilor M J Khan read this proclamation on behalf of the City of Houston.

Several prominent community leaders, Dr. Gul Agha, Aziz Narejo, President, Sindhi Association of North America (SANA), Iqbal Tareen (former President of SANA), Dr Zia Shah, of G M Syed Memorial Committee, Dr Saghir Shaikh, Chairman of the World Sindhi Congress attended and

addressed the meeting. Program included speeches and a short presentation about growth in poverty, persecution of religious minorities, and environmental devastation in Sindh under Pakistani rule.

Other notables who made speeches at the event are: Suhail Memon, Zubair Bhambro of JSQM (“Long Live Sindh National Front”), Noornisa Ghangro, Manzoor Memon, and City Councilor M J Khan.

The World Sindhi Congress organizes this annual event to create a global awareness about the plight of Sindh and Sindhis around the world. “At this critical juncture of history, when civilization faces the continued threat of terrorism from religious extremists, the Houston gathering lent the voice of Sindhi-Americans in support of the Sindhi nation’s peaceful struggle against a military dictatorship which continues to promote Islamic fundamentalists, impose medieval laws against women and minorities, and teach religious intolerance and anti-Semitism in schools,” said, Dr Shaikh of WSC in his concluding remarks.

The meeting resolved that the United States must impress upon the government of Pakistan to protect the human rights of the indigenous people of Sindh. They demanded that Pakistan must stop building of Greater Thal Canal and Kalabagh Dam on the River Indus as these anti-environment projects would devastate Sindh's economy, ecology and culture. They pleaded with the US government to ensure that human rights, environmental, and water issues are amicably and lawfully settled prior to releasing any aid packages to the government of Pakistan. The meeting took special notice of the recent atrocities committed against the Balochs by the Pakistani military and called for a withdrawal of the military from Balochistan. Speakers also asked for the arrest and prosecution of the army officers involved in a gang rape of a female physician serving a rural area of Balochistan.

About The World Sindhi Congress (WSC): WSC is a UK, USA and Canada based human rights advocacy organization. The main objective of WSC is to create a better understanding among the international community about the disadvantaged status of Sindhis in Pakistan and about the Sindhi nation’s struggle for human rights, including the right to self-determination. In addition WSC strives to create an association of Sindhis around the world. WSC is a registered company in England and Wales, and Louisiana, USA, organized to carry out non-profit activities only. For more information visit <http://www.worldsindhicongress.org>