

SANSAD Hails the Joint Indo-Pak Peace and Goodwill Mission

A Joint Indo-Pak Peace and Goodwill Mission comprising Indians and Pakistanis living in the US, Canada, and the UK is gathering in Karachi on December 27. The delegation will visit Peshawar, Quetta, Moenjodaro, Islamabad, and Lahore before crossing into India at the Wagah border on foot. In India it will visit Amritsar, Jammu, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Delhi, and Mumbai. It will meet with the President, the Prime Minister and the leaders of the opposition parties in both Pakistan and India. It will also meet with grassroots and student organizations, women's groups, academics, and NGO's in both countries.

The Goodwill Mission is a part of a growing movement of people-to-people contact in the subcontinent. After more than half a century of warmongering that has caused the loss of many lives, greatly damaged the economic and social potential of both countries, and brought the subcontinent to the brink of nuclear disaster, the people of Pakistan and India are increasingly showing their desire for peace and goodwill between the two countries. The governments of the two countries are also responding to this desire: the Indian government has decided to reduce its troops in the Kashmir valley and the Pakistan government has responded positively to this move.

The Goodwill Mission has fourteen people with origin in Pakistan and fourteen with origin in India. Capt. Mohammad Mahtab, from Maple Ridge, BC, is the sole delegate from Canada but carries with him the wholehearted endorsement of the South Asian Network for Secularism and Democracy (SANSAD), an organization of the South Asian diaspora in British Columbia, Canada.

The noble goal of this mission of goodwill is to end the propagation of hate toward the national other in Pakistan and India, promote peace, respect, and harmony among people and the states, to urge the governments to resolve outstanding issues, and to promote people-to-people contact. We hope that the people's movement for friendship between the two nuclear-armed nations will eventually lead to nuclear disarmament, reduction in military expenditure, increased deployment of resources toward peaceful development, and the free flow of culture across borders.

The South Asian Network for Secularism (SANSAD) hails this historic effort by diasporic South Asians to bring peace to the subcontinent as it is the basic condition for prosperity and social justice in the region.

-30-

SANSAD

South Asian Network for Secularism and Democracy

Suite 435, 205 - 329 North Road, Coquitlam, BC, Canada. V3K 6Z8

phone : (604) 420-2972; FAX: (604) 420-2970

Electronic mail : sansad@sansad.org

[Incorporated in British Columbia under the Society Act as a Non-Profit Society, # S-31797]
