



Open Letter: President Trump, tell the World Bank to Watch Pakistan Closely

Open for signatures through noon ET, Friday, Apr. 17, 2020

Christians in Pakistan are being denied Coronavirus relief

To be delivered on April 17, 2020

TO: Mr. Donald J Trump
The President of the United States
The White House

CC: Mr. Mike Pompeo
The Secretary of State
Washington DC

CC: Mr. David Malpass
President
The World Bank Group

Related: [World Bank release](#) | 04/02/20

Dear Mr. President:

Save the Persecuted Christians, FIACONA, and our Coalition of (# organizations) writes to draw your urgent attention to a dire situation developing in Pakistan. Contacts in Pakistan, NGOs and the media are reporting that some Christians are being denied their government rations by Muslim NGOs approved by Pakistan to distribute funds, food and other supplies.

While we support the World Bank's recent announcement on the allocation to Pakistan of a \$200 million aid package for coronavirus relief through its Pandemic Response Effectiveness Project, we are concerned that funds made available to the government of Pakistan will be solely, or primarily, distributed to the affected populations through local Muslim NGOs to the exclusion of

Christian NGOs which, in ordinary times, are often the victims of government-based discrimination.

The Independent Catholic news reports that, “Christians in Karachi have gone on record as saying that NGOs operating in the port city providing food to the homeless, were refusing to give food vouchers to members of minority faith groups, reporting that only Muslims were given them”.

Established contacts in Pakistan, have reported directly to Save the Persecuted Christians multiple instances where representatives from Muslim NGOs have placed conditions on government-issued food rations for Christians. Several Pakistani Christian civil society leaders—who must remain anonymous due to the risk they take in reporting these instances—have said Christians whom they advocate for and serve were told they would need to convert to Islam if they wanted to receive their covid-19 rations.

Since the World Bank announced the aid package, the government of Pakistan has mandated that all individuals seeking government rations would need to register through a cell phone-based app. Those without phones, internet access or technological understanding may work through a government-approved NGO who can register on their behalf. Unfortunately, the same dynamic is at play where Christian NGOs may be discriminatorily excluded from providing World Bank relief funds. Individual Christians again are at risk of being harassed, threatened and denied aid.

The monetary relief provided by the World Bank promises to be a lifeline to millions of Pakistan's daily wage earners who have lost their income due to the lockdown. An overwhelming majority of the 4 million Christians in Pakistan are marginalized, very poor day laborers or indentured servants.

Mr. President, Christians and other religious minorities in Pakistan need your immediate intervention. The government of Pakistan must enact and enforce measures to correct discrimination and harassment in the distribution of covid-19 aid. This needs to happen immediately before at-risk Christians and other religious minorities begin to starve and die as a result.

Please advise the President of the World Bank, Mr. David Malpass, to ensure that no Pakistani is denied badly needed relief funds because of their religion or belief. We ask that you direct the World Bank to take appropriate action to hold the government of Pakistan accountable with serious consequences should these incidents of discrimination continue.

World Bank officials must also ensure Christians in remote, poverty-stricken areas are informed, equipped and given assistance without being subject to discrimination and harassment. They must insist that NGOs tasked with providing relief are selected in a transparent process without bias towards their religious affiliation. Finally, the World Bank must demand accountability from the government of Pakistan in its management of the \$200 million covid-19 relief.

We thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

Dede Laugesen
Executive Director

John Prabhudoss
Chairman

Save the Persecuted Christians

The Federation of Indian American
Christian Organizations (FIACONA)

And, the following civil society leaders and organizations:

Sajid Ishaq

Chairman

Pakistan Interfaith League (PIL)

Pakistan

Nazia Ansari

Executive Director

Interfaith League Against Poverty (I-LAP)

Pakistan

Koshy George

President

FIACONA

USA

Daniel Emig

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Frontier Partners

USA

Allen Morris

Executive Director

Concerned Methodists

USA

Ann Buwalda

Executive Director

Jubilee Campaign USA

USA

Oleksandra Matviichuk

Head of the board

Center for Civil Liberties

Ukraine

Jim Dau

CEO

Iran Alive Ministries

USA

Faith McDonnell

Director, International Religious Liberty Program

Institute on Religion and Democracy

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Bryan Hickox
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Elizabeth Yore
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Mike Ghouse
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Greg Tweddell
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Forum of State Chairmen, National Youth Council of Nigeria
Nigeria

Juliana Taimoorazy
Founder and President
Iraqi Christian Relief Council
USA

Devon G Cross
Director
Logos Forums
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Puneet Ahluwalia
Executive Director
South Asia Minorities Alliance Foundation
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Jorge Parrott
President
Christ's Mandate For Missions
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Zaif George
Humanitarian Activist
Ray of Hope
Pakistan

Thang Nguyen
CEO & President
Boat People SOS (BPSOS)
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Kevin Freeman

Founder

NSIC Institute

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David Hawes

Missionary

Vision Beyond Borders

Worldwide

Jianli Yang

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Citizen Power Initiatives for China

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