



**Meeting of delegation of Common Wealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)
with the members of Parliamentarians Commission for Human Rights,
Pakistan**

A meeting of delegation of Common Wealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) with the members of Parliamentarians Commission for Human Rights, Pakistan was held in the National Assembly Committee Room on December 12, 2003. The delegation of CPA was headed by Mr. Tom Cox MP and it included Lord Bhatia OBE, Ms. Ann Cryer MP, Lord Elton TD, Mr. Peter Pike MP, Mr. Jonathan Sayeed MP, Mr. Jonathan Shaw MP, Ms. Claire Ward MP and Andrew Pearson. PCHR's delegation was headed by Mr. G.G. Jamal and it included Mr. Umar Ayub Khan MNA, Senator Dr. Shahzad Waseem, Ms. Kashmala Tariq MNA, MR. Gyan Singh MNA, Senator Begum Fauzia Fakhruzzaman, M.P. Bhandra MNA, Dr. Donya Aziz MNA, Mr. Tahir Shah MNA and Mr. Shafique Chaudhry chief coordinator PCHR.

The meeting started with the opening remarks of Dr. G.G. Jamal's who introduced to the CPA delegation, PCHR and its activities. This was followed by an informal discussion regarding human rights practices in Pakistan. Issues which came under discussion included minority rights, domestic violence against women and children rights. Dr. G.G. Jamal told the CPA delegation that the Commission was already considering these issues on priority basis and its different committees were working in consultation with the civil society.

Later on, Senator Dr. Shahzad Waseem briefed the participants about the bill introduced in the Senate to regulate the human organs' transplant. He told the delegation that despite pressure from various quarters, he and his colleagues were committed to the protection of fundamental rights of people of Pakistan.

Mr. Omar Ayub Khan, MNA, Additional Secretary General PCHR, argued that the lack of education was one of the primary reasons of violations of fundamental rights. He further added that PCHR was trying to broaden the traditional definition of human rights, which included only police torture or the degrading behavior of the law enforcement agencies. In the present scenario, however, right to basic needs of life and right to development have come on the top of the list. Mr. M.P. Bhandara told the guests that the minorities were enjoying their proper rights which had been guaranteed in the constitution. Ms. Kashmala Tariq drew the attention of CPA delegates towards the violation of human rights in Occupied Kashmir and asked them

to play their active role for addressing the issue. Later on Mr. M.P Bhandara held a brief meeting with the delegation regarding the Kashmir issue. He introduced Kashmir geographically and briefed the delegation about the position of Pakistan and India regarding the Kashmir dispute and asked the delegation to visit the area and play their due role.

Mr. Tom Cox, head of CPA delegation, appreciated the spirit and vision of members of PCHR and their struggle for the promotion of human rights in Pakistan. He offered them all sort of technical assistance and cooperation especially in the arena of children rights and the proposed bill to regulate human organs' transplant. He emphasized the need of an enhanced mutual cooperation between the two parliaments in this regard.

