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PRESS RELEASE

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WSC Celebrates Great Leader G.M. Sayed's 103rd Birthday

LONDON, UK. The 103rd birthday of Saen G. M. Sayed was celebrated with great enthusiasm and respect by the World Sindhi Congress (WSC) in three cities of UK on Saturday January 20th, 2006. The participants and speakers vowed to continue Sayed's mission.

London

Scores of Sindhis and Balochs came from throughout the UK, Sindh, India and Europe to attend the London event, which commenced with the Sindhi national anthem, followed by a cake cutting ceremony performed by Munir Hyder Shah, WSC office bearers and guests.

A session of speeches followed, conducted by Ms Suraiya Makhdoom, chair of the birthday programme and senior vice chair of WSC.

A number of speakers shed light on Sayed's great contributions. Dr. Lakhu Luhana, the general secretary of WSC, thanked the participants on behalf of WSC, which organizes this event every year to express gratitude for Sayed's life, work, struggles and the sacrifices he made for the emancipation of the Sindhi nation. Dr Luhana pointed out that Sayed was the inspiration behind the creation of WSC, and discussed the main points of Sayed's message and

struggle: Sindhis are a nation, Sindh is a country, independence is our right and freedom is achievable. Dr Luhana read passages from Sayed's "Sindh Speaks" to show how Sayed elaborately championed the cause of his beloved Sindh.

Dr Rubina Shaikh, the finance secretary of WSC, said that Sayed was a beacon of light not only for Sindhis, but for all nationalists. Dr. Shaikh explained that Sayed was against religious fundamentalism, advocated secularism, and was highly cultured and graceful. Wit and humour, coupled with hospitality and generosity, were the main traits of his personality. Sayed founded the Jeeay Sindh movement to achieve Sindhu Desh, and Amnesty International declared G. M. Sayed a Prisoner of Conscience when he was put under house arrest for the last time in 1992.

Mr Samad Balouch of the Balouch Action Committee said that Balouch people are united with their Sindhi brothers and sisters in celebrating the birthday of the great nationalist leader, G. M. Sayed. He said that Balouchs and Sindhis share a common history, a common culture and a common enemy—Pakistan. Mr. Balouch explained that unity is needed in order to achieve our objectives.

Dr Banu Chaudhary, a Bangladesh political stalwart, said that like the Bengali freedom fighters, G. M. Sayed had a dream to gain independence for his beloved Sindh. Sayed sacrificed his life and freedom for the cause of his people. He wanted to make the world a better place.

Mr Noorudin Mengal, a young Balouch political activist, grandson of Sardar Attaullah Mengal and son of Javed Mengal, paid rich tributes to Saen G. M. Sayed. He said that Sayed is one in a million, and that his sacrifices are unparalleled. We respect his courage, Mr Mengal said, and we need to have the desire to win. Just as the less powerful nation of Vietnam could defeat the mighty power of America, so we too can defeat the mighty Punjabi establishment of Pakistan. He said that the Balouchistan issue is exposed to the world now and that Pakistan can hide it no more. We have the will, the courage, the dedication, and we believe in our motherland.

Mr Munir Hyder Shah, great-grandson of Saen G. M. Sayed, said that a love of Sindh and a hatred for anti-Sindhi elements is in his genes. He said that nations are not made of religions, and that's why Pakistan is still unsure of its national identity. Sayed believed in non-violent struggle for an independent Sindh and regretted that Sindhi medium schools are being closed.

In concluding the session, Ms Suraiya Makhdoom said that Sayed's whole life was dedicated to the cause of Sindh. He started his career at a very young age, when he had to stand up on a table to deliver his speeches. Sayed fought against every injustice done to Sindh. He struggled for the separation of Sindh from the Bombay Presidency and achieved it in 1936. He moved the 1943 Pakistan Resolution in the Sindh Assembly, as he thought that was the best option for Sindh. However, when he realised that the Pakistani state was going to be detrimental rather than beneficial to Sindh and some other nations opting to join it, he admitted his mistake and said no to the creation of Pakistan in 1946 and struggled for an independent Sindh until his final days. Ms Makhdoom also mentioned Sayed's literary and other contributions. Sayed was very well respected by Sindh writers and poets, many of whom wrote poems about him. She read out a passage from Shaikh Ayaz's autobiography (Kithe ta Bhanhibo Thaku Musafira), in which Ayaz says, "Who knew destiny would throw him at [Sayed's] feet."

The speeches session was interactive; after every speech, the audience was given a chance to ask questions or present their comments.

The speeches session was followed by a workshop on key questions: the importance of unity among Sindhis and Balochs in the UK and how to achieve it. The workshop was conducted by Dr Shaikh and Dr Lohano and provided a good opportunity for debate and discussion.

After a sumptuous dinner, a music programme conducted by celebrated artists Harbans Singh and his team concluded the event.

Sheffield

Saeen G. M. Sayed's 103rd birthday anniversary was celebrated with great enthusiasm in Sheffield and was attended by Sindhis from Sheffield, Manchester, Leeds, Bradford and surrounding areas. Mir Khushik discussed the unparalleled efforts of Saeen G. M. Syed for Sindh and Sindhis. The participants enjoyed cake, and a typical Sindhi meal was served.

Edinburgh

Sindhis from Edinburgh, Glasgow and other Scottish cities and towns came in large numbers to pay their tribute to Saeen G. M. Sayed's life, work and sacrifices for the cause of Sindh. The WSC's deputy general secretary, Sarwar Memon, Sain Bux Patoojo and others addressed the event. A cake cutting ceremony followed a lively discussion on the current situation in Sindh.

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 persecuted status of Sindhis in Pakistan and about Sindhi peoples' struggles for their human rights, including the right to self-determination. In addition, WSC strives to create associations among Sindhis around the world. WSC is a registered company in England and Wales, and, USA, and is organised to carry out non-profit activities only. For more information, visit <http://www.worldsindhicongress.org>.