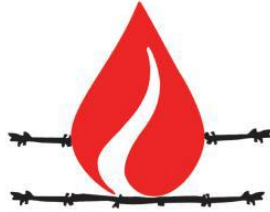


Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV)

UPR Submission

Pakistan

28th session of UPR Working Group (Nov. 2017)
NGO submission



سازمان دفاع از قربانیان خشونت
Organization for Defending Victims
of Violence

www.odvv.org

About ODVV

1. The Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV) is a non-governmental, non-profit, non-partisan organization in Special Consultative Status to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC). The ODVV was established in 1988 in Tehran and has been active in the field of human rights and humanitarian activities.
2. The ODVV is also associated to the United Nations Department of Public Information (UNDPI), a participatory of the NGOs Coalition for an International Court (based in New York), and national coordinator of the Global March Against Child Labour (based in New Delhi) which cooperated in a variety of issues with international organizations and has working relations with many NGOs in Iran and around the globe.
3. The ODVV is also a member of the International Organization against Small and Light Weapons, and the UN Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (CONGO), and the International Movement for a Just World (JUST), AMAN Network of Rehabilitation Centres in the Middle East and North Africa, International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT).
4. During the last 2 decades, we have done so many activities, mainly informative with regard to human rights and supportive of the victims of violence. Various human rights education courses, workshops, seminars, conferences have been held or co-held by the ODVV for various sectors of society: civil society institutions and governmental organizations.
5. Other Activities:
 - Participation in UN Commission on Human Rights annual sessions, and the new Human Rights Council sessions in Geneva. Written and oral statements on various items of the agenda are issued by the ODVV.
 - Internship for foreign students
 - Publication of different books and booklets on human rights such as Rights of the Child, Racism, Racial Discrimination and Xenophobia. Publication of Defenders Newsletter (English), human rights news and developments bulletin (Farsi), Rights of the Child bulletin (Farsi)
 - Daily electronic human rights newsletter in English and Farsi.
6. As a nongovernmental organization active in human rights, the ODVV has collected documents and data, through published information in news websites, and is providing the following report on the human rights situation of Pakistan, with the aim of the improvement of the human rights situation.

International Instruments

7. In the first and second rounds of UPR, Pakistan has received 68 recommendations to ratify international instruments including: the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CPED)(2 recommendations), the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC)(11 recommendations out of which only 1 is accepted by the country), the Optional Protocol to CEDAW (4 recommendations), the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (OP- CRPD)(1 recommendation), the

Optional Protocol to CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict (OP-CRC) (4 recommendations) and the Convention against Torture (CAT) (8 recommendations)¹.

8. The country has also received 19 recommendations to withdraw the remaining reservations to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)².

Violence against Religious Minorities

9. Despite the fact that Pakistan constitution guarantees the minority rights to freely practice their religion, religious minorities face discrimination in both law and practice. There are reports of the members of minorities being attacked and killed or religious sites being destroyed by suicide attacks. In February 2016 an armed group called TTP (Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan) attacked a Shia mosque in Peshawar, killing 20 and injuring 60 worshippers. In March 2016, another TTP affiliated group attacked two churches killing at least 22 people. Also in May 2016, 45 Ismailis were attacked and killed in a bus to Karachi³.
10. The Hazara' life is also endangered by armed groups in some areas of Pakistan, including Quetta, where the students' buses are attacked. The incidents lead to buses refusal to give Hazarah students a ride because of the potential dangers for other passengers which in itself lead to the students' lack of access to education. The perpetrators of the mentioned crimes have not been brought to justice.⁴

Drone Strikes against Civilians

11. There are still reports of drone attacks killing civilians. In January 2016, drone strikes killed two foreign aid workers who were held as hostages by al-Qa'ida .
12. According to a published report, about 90 percent of the people killed in drone strikes have not been the intended targets of the attacks,⁵ meaning that the possibility of civilians being killed in the strikes is too high.
13. Although the blame of the killings is frequently put on the unreliability of intelligence data, some reports reflect the intentional killing of innocent civilians in drone strikes⁶. There has been reports describing a pattern in which a drone missile hits an area, people run to rescue the victims and then another missile attacks the rescuers⁷.

Violence against Women and Girls

14. It is noted that in February 2016, Punjab Assembly unanimously approved the Protection of Women against Violence Bill. However, on the ground, various forms of violence against women and girls continue and appear to be on the rise. According to the reports⁸, "there has been a 20 per cent increase in cases of violence against women reported every year from 2012 to 2015". "In

¹ . UPR-Info database.

² . the pervious source.

³ . <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/asia-and-the-pacific/pakistan/report-pakistan/>

⁴ . <http://www.dawn.com/news/1287981>

⁵ . http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/drone-papers_us_561ed361e4b0c5a1ce61f463?v4w019k9=

⁶ . <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-24557333>

⁷ . <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/03/the-obama-administrations-drone-strike-dissembling/473541/>

⁸ . Punjab Gender Parity Report 2016

2013, more than 5,800 cases of violence against women were reported in Punjab”. In 2015, there were reports of 6, 505 cases of violence against women⁹. The reported cases of violence include murder, honor killing, abduction/kidnapping, domestic violence, suicide, rape/gang-rape, sexual assault, acid throwing and some other forms.

15. This is while the country has received 69 recommendations on protection of women’s rights and promotion of gender equality in the first and second UPR cycles and accepted 57 recommendations in this regard¹⁰.
16. It is noted that Pakistan revised the country law, in 2016, in order to protect women and girls against crimes such as rape and honor killings. The amendment considers more serious punishment for such crimes in line with Pakistan commitments to protect women against criminal acts. However, the activists believe that the move is falls short of providing women with “enough” protection, because there are still flaws to the law leaving the room for perpetrators to get away with their crimes. Another serious obstacle is that violence against women is rooted in “repressive” traditional “mindsets”¹¹ of men who act as women’s guardians.

Recommendations: Considering the current situation in Pakistan ODVV calls on Pakistan government to:

17. Take all appropriate steps to ratify international instruments, especially the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC)(11 recommendations).
18. Take action, along with universities in Quetta and the Balochistan, to ensure access for Hazara students to education.
19. Announce the practical measures designed to bring perpetrators of deadly attacks against minorities to justice, as an effective method to prevent violence, considering the fact that such attacks fuel the flame of sectarian tensions.
20. Amend the existing laws effectively to ensure the protection of the civil rights of political minorities.
21. Announce the steps taken to end all forms of violence against women in line with the accepted recommendations of pervious UPR cycles and considering the current rising trend of such crimes, while the existing laws are amended.
22. Start a national action plan to end child marriage, harmonizing the efforts of government institutions, civil society members and the public to achieve the common goal, in line with 6 accepted recommendations to promote children’s rights in the country.
23. Start a national action plan to address the roots of the activities labeled as “honor killing”, changing the existing cultural mindsets that fan the flames of such crimes.

⁹ . <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1060669/violence-against-women-has-increased-report/>

¹⁰ . <https://www.upr-info.org/en/review/Pakistan>

¹¹ . http://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/28/opinion/pakistans-onor-killing-law-isnt-enough.html?_r=0

24. Recalling the fact that killing civilians out of war zones can be considered as war crimes¹², we call on the Human Rights Council and the international community to condemn and emphasize on both the illegitimacy and illegality of drone strikes, since it appears to be beyond the capacities of Pakistan government.

¹² . <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/feb/08/law-war-cia-john-brennan-drone-kill-list>