

# The VOICE

The Official Publication of Houston Karachi Sister City Association  
 “Helping Build Bridges of Friendship & Commerce”



Houston Karachi Sister City Association

*in association with*

Consulate General of Pakistan

Mayor's Office of Trade and International Affairs  
 and The Greater Houston Partnership

*Presents*

**Pakistan - U. S. Relations: Priorities for Economic & Cultural Ties**

*featuring*

**H. E. AIZAZ AHMAD CHAUDHRY**

Foreign Secretary of Pakistan



Member of the Foreign Service of Pakistan with 35 years of bilateral and multilateral experience. Presently serving as Foreign Secretary of Pakistan since December 2013. Earlier he served as the Foreign Office Spokesman. In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Chaudhry has served as Additional Foreign Secretary for UN and Disarmament Affairs, and Director General for relations with South Asian countries, in which capacity he has remained closely associated with the peace process with India. Overseas, he served as Ambassador of Pakistan to the Netherlands, where he engaged in active public diplomacy in cooperation with Pakistani community to win friends for Pakistan. He also authored a book “Pakistan mirrored to Dutch eyes” published by Sangemeel publications. In his other overseas assignments, Mr. Chaudhry served as Deputy Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations in New York, Chef de Cabinet to the Secretary General of ECO in Tehran, and Pakistan Embassies in Washington, Doha and Cairo. Holds Masters in International Relations from Tufts University, Massachusetts, and a First Class First Bachelor of Science from Punjab University, Lahore. Mr. Chaudhry is married, and has three children. He was born in 1958.

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## INTRODUCTION:

The Houston Karachi Sister City Association (HKSCA) is an inclusive organization, whose sole mission is to promote peace through mutual respect, understanding and cooperation — one individual, one community at a time.

The principal objective of HKSCA is to increase cultural and educational Exchange, promote and improve understanding and interaction between the people of Houston and Karachi. The association also helps build bridges of friendship and commerce between these two vital centers of culture and economy. By supporting individual, civic, and business exchanges, HKSCA aims to develop ongoing projects, and events to promote cultural dialogue, as well as create opportunities between the citizens of the two Cities. HKSCA was established in Houston in 2009, when Syed Mustafa Kamal, the then Nazim-ae-Aala (Mayor) of Karachi, signed the Houston-Karachi Sister City Association Memorandum along with the then Mayor Bill White of Houston, Texas, at a ceremony at the Houston City Hall. This achievement was the result of the efforts of former Council Member M. J. Khan and many community members who work together to obtain the approval of Houston City Council. Mr. Haroon Shaikh served as founding President of HKSCA.



Since the inception, HKSCA has focused on supporting and facilitating various initiatives in the City of Karachi. In 2010, HKSCA succeeded in obtaining firefighting equipment from the City of Houston Fire Department and delivered it to the City of Karachi. This equipment was sent to the people of Karachi in the spirit of cooperation and goodwill as a result of the Sister City relationship with Houston.

HKSCA represented Karachi and Pakistan at the Annual Houston International Festival with a colorful fashion show and pop music by a Pakistani band from Houston.

The current HKSCA Board of Directors, under the leadership of President Muhammad Saeed Sheikh, plan to work in the areas of Health Care, Education, Humanitarian, Culture, and Trade, such as the Alliance of Pakistan Flood Relief Efforts, Awaraan Baluchistan Earthquake, Thar Drought Relief and Tele Medicine Initiatives.

## President of Houston-Karachi meets with Honorary Chairperson of Sister Cities International, President of the United States:

President Obama met with Mr. Muhammad Sheikh, President of the Houston-Karachi Sister City Association, during the President's visit to Houston in March 2012.

Mr. Sheikh informed the president of the good work Houstonians are doing to strengthen the ties between Houston and Pakistan. President Obama showed off his Urdu language skills by telling Mr. Sheikh "shukria," Urdu for "thank you."



## Board of Directors:

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# HKSCA Activities Report

## Humanitarian Efforts:

The Houston-Karachi Sister City Association in collaboration with one of the top four star 501 (c) (3) humanitarian NGO of USA the Helping Hand for Relief & Development (HHRD) sponsored a new water pump with filtration plant in Karachi, Pakistan, as few can forget the devastating heat wave of June 2015, which took the lives of over 2,000 people in Karachi and affected countless others. The plant; which is sponsored by the Houston-Karachi Sister City Association (HKSCA), has a capacity of 2,000 liters per day, so as to annually provide fresh, clean water to over 60,000 people. The project was done in coordination with Alkhidmat Foundation.



Earlier in 2014 when Tharparkar, Sind, Pakistan was hit by a historic drought and famine,



HKSCA in association with HHRD did a solar powered submersible pump with a capacity of 18,000 liters per day in the Village of Dadsar, Tharparkar. Before this project, it was very difficult to plant a single leaf in Dadsar, but with this HKSCA sponsored sweet water project, the infertile land has been blessed with fertility, with fruits & vegetables being grown in the area.

In 2011, HKSCA initiated & formed the "Alliance of Pakistan Flood Relief Efforts" chaired by HKSCA President Muhammad Saeed Sheikh. The Alliance includes more than 42 Community organizations and media outlets. The Alliance successfully shipped a 40 ft. Container worth more than \$100,000 of relief supplies to the flood stricken people of Pakistan. HKSCA had led the efforts for a fund-raise, which collected \$80,000 dollars for the relief supplies distributed among

five non-profit organizations. With guidance from HHRD, the donated items were distributed in Mirpurkhas to the internally displaced persons' camp in Pakistan's Sindh Province.



The name of this collaborative effort was changed to "Alliance of Benevolence" and three HKSCA-led projects were implemented providing humanitarian services: (1) Oklahoma Tornado relief (\$10,000); (2) Earthquake Relief Work of \*Awaraan Baluchistan (raised around \$50,000); and (3) Thar Drought Recuperation Program (raised \$100,000). In Awaraan Baluchistan, the Houstonian Colony comprised of 51 homes, and five water projects has been established utilizing the funds collected.

In Nov. 2014, HKSCA coordinated "Alliance of Benevolence" Pakistan Flood Relief 2014 organized a fundraising Dinner and Intellectual Conversation with Prof. Anwar Masood and Khalid Masood Khan. The event raised over \$40,000 funds to help the damaged schools located in the rural effected areas of Punjab.

## Houston-Karachi Sister City Association wins the Sister Cities International 2011 Innovation Humanitarian Assistance Award:



In 2012, the Houston-Karachi Sister City Association was selected as the winner of the Sister Cities International 2011 Innovation: Humanitarian Assistance Award for a city with population more than 500,001. The award was presented at the 56th Annual Sister Cities International Conference: A new Era for Citizen Diplomacy in Jacksonville, Florida on July 14th, 2012. Cristal Montañez Baylor, Executive Director Hashoo Foundation USA, member of the Executive Board of Directors of



Houston-Karachi Sister City Association and Alliance for Pakistan Floods Relief Efforts Coordinating Committee, received Award. Later, on behalf of the City of Houston, Mayor Annise D. Parker along with members of City Council honored the "Alliance of Pakistan Floods Relief Efforts" in a special ceremony at City Hall.

## HKSCA participated & hosted Pakistan at the Houston Consular Ball 2014, Sponsored by Midland Energy:





## Culture:

Houston-Karachi Sister City Association (HKSCA) in association with the Consulate General of Pakistan, Pakistan Students Associations (PSAs) of University of Houston, Indus Arts Council, and Bhangra Group of Rice University participated in the iFest 2014. Performances included modern and traditional dresses fashion show, journey through the provinces of Pakistan with regional dances. HKSCA was well represented at the opening ceremony children parade done by the students of Iman Academy.



As evident by the mammoth attendance, "Houston Iftar": The Annual Ramadan dinner traditionally hosted by the Mayor of Houston, turned out to be a huge success every year. Since 2012 until 2015. Mayor Annise Parker initiated that Abu Dhabi, Baku, Istanbul, and Karachi Sister Cities Association should jointly organize this event. State and City representatives, Houston City Council member's, Diplomats and more than 1600 representatives from the local and International community attended this important occasion.



Thanksgiving Parade 2015: The City of Houston organized a thanksgiving parade in downtown Houston. This was 66th Annual event, where about 250,000 of city residents watched and hundred's participated in the parade. The City administration for the first time prepared a Global Gateway Float led by Mayor Anise Parker, for the Sister Cities of Houston where Houston Karachi Sister City Association represented culture of Pakistan.

Houston Karachi Sister City Association in Collaboration with Pakistan-American Association of Greater Houston (PAGH), Sage Productions, PSA, DIL Houston Chapter, and Spectrum Décor presented a vibrant colorful performance of Pakistan's Folk & Modern Culture at the Houston Turkish Festival World Pavilion on Sat. November 14, 2015.

The 10th Networking Dinner of the Sister Cities Association of Houston (SCH) featuring Pakistan was a big success, with participants saying that they want to visit the beautiful Pakistan, after watching a special documentary about the country. Consul General of Pakistan Afzaal Mahmood was the Guest of Honor on this occasion. Patron of this event was S. Javaid Anwar, CEO of Midland Energy. Event was attended by more than 10 heads of diplomatic missions, including the Turkey, Qatar, Germany, Korea, Angola, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Spain, and chairpersons of Sister Cities Associations.





## Trade and Commerce:

The Houston Karachi Sister City Association (HKSCA), in association with the Greater Houston Partnership and Mayor's Office of Protocol & International Affairs, organized a business lunch to honor Pakistan Ambassador to the US, H. E. Jalil Abbas Jilani, at the ZaZa Hotel in Houston. More than 100 corporate leaders and entrepreneurs representing the political, business, academic, and Healthcare industry sectors attended the event. These leaders included Congressman Steve Stockman, Congressman Al Green, Harris County Sheriff Adrian Garcia, Mayor Pro-Tam Ed Gonzales, and Honorable Consul General of Pakistan Afzaal Mahmood. Leading businessman S.Javaid Anwar of Midland Energy graciously underwrote the event. Ambassador H. E. Jalil Abbas Jilani received a Congressional Certificate from Congressman Al Green, and Honorary Citizenship Certificate from Mayor Pro-Tam Ed Gonzales on behalf of the City of Houston.



Earlier Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States Mr. Jalil Abbas Jilani; accompanied by the Houston Consul General of Pakistan Mr. Afzaal Mahmood; and Mr. Muhammad Saeed Sheikh, President of Houston-Karachi Sister City Association (HKSCA); visited Midland (The oil capital of the Permian Basin) to discuss opportunities that are available to explore Shale Oil and Gas reserves that Pakistan has to offer to American companies and investors'. Javaid Anwar, President & CEO of Midland Energy Inc., and Petroplex Energy Inc arranged a luncheon in his honor, where the former 34th US Secretary of Commerce Mr. Don Evans, Mayor of Midland Mr. Jerry Morales, and other CEO of several prominent oil corporations from Midland, Texas were in attendance.



In May 2012, HKSCA hosted seven members of a business delegation of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) in Houston. During this visit, HKSCA arranged the Port of Houston visit, networking dinner at the Pakistan Consulate, meeting with Mayor's International Trade Development Council, meeting at Sam's Club to explore business opportunities and "Doing Business between Houston and Karachi Forum" at the Greater Houston Partnership (GHP). The visit concluded as President & CEO of the Greater Houston Partnership (GHP) Jeff Moseley, President of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI) Mian Abrar Ahmad, and President of the Houston-Karachi Sister City Association (HKSCA) Muhammad Saeed Sheikh; signed a historic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), for development of mutual beneficial initiatives in the fields of import-export, investment climate enhancement and business information among the members and affiliates of KCCI, GHP, and HKSCA.



In order to encourage the US business community to enhance trade ties with Pakistan, Chief Patron of Houston-Karachi Sister Association - USA, S. Javaid Anwar stressed the need to improve Pakistan's image and clarify many misconceptions about the overall security situation as the law and order situation has noticeably improved in Pakistan and it was not as bad as being portrayed by the media. Exchanging views with President KCCI during his visit to the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), he said that efforts being made to maintain peace and stability in Karachi and elsewhere need to be effectively highlighted in order to deal with the negativity about Pakistan. In conclusion of the meeting both Iftikhar Vohra President KCCI & S. Javaid Anwar Chief Patron HKSCA agreed to enhance frequent exchange of trade delegations between the two countries and work in organizing a Trade exhibition in Houston by Karachi Chamber & Houston Karachi Sister City Association which would bring the business communities closer

A "Meet & Greet" Networking Luncheon was organized by the Houston Karachi Sister Association featuring delegation of the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce & Industries (RCCI) in Houston.





## Initiatives by Consulate General of Pakistan & Commercial Section

### Energy Trade Mission:

A 22-member Energy Trade Mission, led by Mr. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Federal Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources, visited Houston on 13-16 November 2013. The participants included heads of leading oil and gas companies from public as well as private sector. Mr. Richard Olson, the Ambassador of the United States to Pakistan also accompanied the Mission. The delegation came to Houston with the aim of exploring potential of cooperation between the Pakistani and US companies in exploring oil and gas resources of Pakistan in addition to addressing the immediate issue of gas shortage in Pakistan. The delegation had serious meetings with oil and gas companies like Shell, Exxon Mobil, Conoco Phillips, Halliburton, Baker Hughes, Weatherford etc. The Energy Trade Mission to Houston is a significant step towards strengthening cooperation between Pakistani and US energy companies. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources foresee establishment of Pakistan's first LNG terminal with the help of US expertise and technology. US companies have the potential to assist Pakistan in exploring and exploiting its conventional and non conventional energy resources including shale gas.

### LNG Project Structuring:

A 15 member delegation from Pakistan comprising officers from various Energy Sector Organizations including the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources, the Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority of Pakistan, the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority of Pakistan, the Sui Southern Gas Company, Inter State Gas Systems and the Pakistan State Oil Company visited Houston from 4th to 9th March 2014. The delegation was headed by Mr. Arshad Mirza, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources. The purpose of the visit was to build capacity of these Pakistani organizations about the various aspects of structuring the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Projects. This may be noted that a Houston based company "Exceleerate Energy" has entered into joint venture with a Pakistani company "Engro" to build the first ever off-shore floating LNG receiving terminal at Port Qasim, Pakistan.



### Pakistani Mangos In Houston:

It is a matter of great pride for the city of Houston, who received the first ever commercial consignment of Pakistani mangos in June 2014. The volume of import of Pakistani mangoes increased eight times in 2015 and mangoes were distributed throughout USA Washington D.C, New York, Chicago, Michigan, Baltimore, Atlanta, Dallas, San Antonio and Austin.

### Houston Business Delegation at Expo Pakistan 2015





## Education:

As part of the Education initiatives, HKSCA participation in the YES program was recognized by the US State Department & Center for Inter-Cultural Exchange. The program led by HKSCA member of board of directors, David Godwin, managed hosting of many exchange students from Pakistan with Houston families of Pakistani origin. In past years, HKSCA members hosted the exchange students. In March 2012, HKSCA hosted the delegation of iEarn Pakistan to Houston Coordinated by Director HKSCA David Godwin. Farah Kamal, Director of iEarn Pakistan, led the delegation. HKSCA coordinated an extensive schedule of activities for the delegation to promote the efforts of iEarn Pakistan and its cooperation with HKSCA and the YES program. The highlight of the visit was signing of a MoU between iEarn Pakistan & HKSCA. The MoU seeks to establish an education exchange program between Schools of Houston Karachi, under the iEarn program.



## HKSCA Hosted a Journalist Delegation from Karachi Press Club, Pakistan:

HKSCA hosted a journalist delegation from Karachi Press Club, Pakistan in January 2014. In this occasion, HKSCA organized a forum on "Role of Media in Strengthening US-Pak Relations". Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee presented recognition shields to the visiting journalists including Allauddin Khanzada, Azhar Hussain, Minhaj ul Rab and Zahid Khanzada in appreciation of their journalistic services. Sam Merchant, on behalf of Congressman Al Green, presented US Congressional certificates, while Ms. Deanea Leflore, Protocol Director of Houston Mayor Anise Parker, presented certificates and special City lapel pins to visiting journalists. The members of journalists delegation visited abc Channel 13 and NASA.

HKSCA also hosted in April 2015 a Karachi Journalists delegation which consists of Saleem Ahmad, Naseem Haider, Raja Zahid Khanzada, Qazi Yasir, Owais Alam, Monis Bin Ali representing Jang, Geo News, Ary News, Duniya TV.



## HKSCA PICTORIAL





## PAKISTAN: A Preferred Business Destination

### Why Pakistan?

➤ World Bank reported in 2010 that “Pakistan was the top reformer in the region and the number 10 globally making it easier to start a business, reducing the cost to register property, increasing penalties for violating corporate governance rules, and replacing a requirement to license every shipment with two-year duration licenses for traders.”

➤ The world’s 6th most populous country (180 million), functioning democracy & located at the centre of India, China, Central Asia and Persian Gulf

➤ GDP of \$488 billion (PPP), 28th biggest economy

➤ Annual exports 2011: \$25 billion, Annual imports: \$40 billion

➤ Exports to USA 2011: \$3.83 billion, Imports from USA 2011: \$2.01 billion

➤ Free Trade Agreements with China, Malaysia, Sri-Lanka, South Asia and negotiations underway with EU, Japan, Indonesia, Turkey

➤ Bilateral investment promotion & protection agreements with 47 countries- the one with USA is under negotiations

➤ Double taxation treaties with 52 countries

➤ Full repatriation of capital, dividends, royalty, technical & franchise fees allowed

➤ Raising of local or foreign finance allowed

➤ Broad network of Export Processing Zones/ Industrial Estates

➤ Over 700 multinationals, including around 80 US corporations, already successfully operating in Pakistan

➤ 423000 annual English speaking graduates & undergraduates

➤ 25 million internet users & 120 million mobile phone users

➤ Abundant reserves of coal, natural gas, gold, copper, marble, gemstones, chromites and a range of other minerals

➤ Among the world’s top producers of Rock Salt, Chickpeas, Cotton, Yarn, Fabric, Milk, Banaspati Ghee, Dates, Mangoes, Kinno/ Mandarin, Halal Meat, Sugar, Wheat, Rice & Cement.



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