

Honorable Mr. Justice Mian Saqib Nisar,
Chief Justice,
Supreme Court of Pakistan,
Islamabad.

September 23, 2018

Your Honour,

An appeal for nation-wide dewateronisation

1. We as members of 'Citizens Against Weapons' feel reassured and deeply appreciate your suo motto notice of the tragic incident in Karachi on August 13, 2018, in which an innocent 10 year old school girl Amal Umer lost her precious life. As members of 'Citizens Against Weapons' we have advocated that the only solution to Pakistan's burgeoning violence, militancy and irreparable daily loss of precious lives lies in complete dewateronisation of all segments of society.
2. The crux of this tragedy, as well as the almost daily cases of other violent instances making headlines in our media, is the prevalence of some 20 million legal and illegal weapons in the hands of civilians in our country. It is a well documented fact that gun violence is directly proportional to the prevalence of guns in any country, the worst example being the USA. Countries such as Australia, Japan and UK, through dewateronisation schemes, have almost completely eliminated gun-violence in their countries.
3. It is ironic that in Pakistan, weapons and violence are a hobby and indulgence of its richest elite. Only between 2008 and 2013, the Federal Government had issued 69473 licenses for prohibited bore weapons on the recommendation of the parliamentarians. This was confirmed by a written statement presented by the Interior Minister in the National Assembly on 28 February 2013. Likewise on 29 December 2014, the Provincial Home Minister informed the Punjab Assembly that 50 per cent of 1.8 million arms licences issued in the province were fake and there was no record of 900,000 arms licenses issued in Punjab. The Sindh Home Minister is on public record for having issued 300,000 prohibited bore gun licenses to his friends and party supporters.

4. Your Honour, The Supreme Court of Pakistan in its Suo Motu case 16 of 2011 had stated that, *“Karachi is full of arms and ammunition of prohibited and non-prohibited bores including licensed and illicit, therefore, Karachi has to be cleansed from all kinds of weapons by adhering to the laws available on the subject, and if need be, by promulgating new legislation.”*
5. Your Honour, we believe that providing security to all citizens is the first responsibility of the state. When the state shirks from this responsibility, it is taken over by self-appointed gangs, mafias, individuals and criminals, now seen lurking in every street and intersection of our cities. Pakistan today has hundreds of rural and urban private militias and armies – in gross violation of Article 256 of the Constitution.
6. Your Honour, we humbly request that both the Federal and the Provincial governments be directed to immediately fulfill their constitutional duty to protect the lives of all citizens and to honor the Honourable Supreme Court judgment of Suo Motu case 16 of 2011 to:
 - a. Declare that weapons of all categories lie only in the domain of the state and that no citizen regardless of his/her status is allowed to possess, carry or display any weapon, licensed or otherwise.
 - b. Stop issuance of all weapon licenses and declare the existing weapons (largely issued on the basis of favour, status or bribe), as null and void.
 - c. Execute nation-wide schemes for surrender of unlicensed weapons and buy-back of licensed weapons, on the same model as the one successfully implemented by Australia and UK.

Sincerely,

Asad H Kizilbash

Rumana Husain

Naeem Sadiq

for
CITIZENS AGAINST WEAPONS

