



# CHURCH IN CHAINS

AN IRISH VOICE FOR PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

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Mr Sardar Shuja Alam  
Ambassador  
Embassy of Pakistan  
1B Ailesbury Road  
DUBLIN 4

6 March 2020

Your Excellency,

I hope that you are well and continuing to enjoy your posting in Ireland.

We were pleased to meet you last July to discuss the issues around the blasphemy laws and to listen to your perspective on the situation and how it might be improved.

However, on this occasion, I am writing to express our deep shock at the recent horrifying murder of Saleem Masih, a Christian from the Punjab city of Kasur, who died of severe injuries to his internal organs three days after a Muslim landowner and six other men tortured him for "polluting" a tube-well by rinsing in it.

We were particularly disheartened to learn that when Mr Masih's father, Ghafoor Masih, arrived at the scene of the brutal assault to find his son lying unconscious, he found that "Dogar [on whose land the well was situated] had apparently summoned the cops himself, and it was evident that he had also bribed them, because they tried to coerce us into 'settling the matter' amicably."

We were further shocked to discover that the accused assailants were granted bail by the police. Such actions have led to Mr Masih's grieving father to say, "After seeing the police's indifference to our ordeal, I do not have much hope that my son's attackers will be brought to justice."

Yesterday in Lahore, a group of religious leaders, Muslim and Christian, met together to discuss their response to this brutal murder. They appealed to the government of Pakistan to take practical measures to avoid this type of incident in the future, bring the perpetrators of Saleem Masih's murder to justice and actively promote interreligious harmony in Pakistan.

We join in echoing this appeal for urgent decisive action by the government of Pakistan to bring the perpetrators of this savage murder to justice and we also reiterate our appeal to the government of Pakistan to fully commit to the long-term work of overcoming prejudice towards religious minorities in society.

Yours sincerely,

David Turner  
(Director)