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Pakistan, Australia Strengthen Human Rights Ties

August 1, 2025

– Categories: Human Rights



On July 30, 2025, Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan Neil Hawkins met with Federal Minister for Human Rights Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar in Islamabad to advance bilateral cooperation on human rights. Joined by Secretary of the Ministry of Human Rights Abdul Khalique Shaikh, the discussion centered on fostering inclusive governance and sharing best practices, with Hawkins praising Pakistan’s recent legislative strides, according to the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP).

The meeting underscored Pakistan’s commitment to strengthening legal frameworks for protecting vulnerable communities. Tarar briefed Hawkins on key reforms, including amendments to the death penalty laws, the Islamabad Capital Territory Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2025, and the National Commission for Minorities Rights Bill, 2025, as

reported by Nation.com.pk. He also addressed efforts to curb misuse of blasphemy laws through enhanced legal safeguards, emphasizing institutional accountability. Hawkins commended these steps, noting Pakistan's progress in aligning with international human rights standards, per APP.

Both sides expressed a shared resolve to deepen collaboration. Hawkins highlighted Australia's support for Pakistan's human rights institutions, such as the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR), which received an "A" grading from the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, as noted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Tarar reaffirmed Pakistan's National Action Plan on Human Rights, which prioritizes policy reforms and access to justice, according to Nation.com.pk.

Public sentiment on X reflected positive views, with posts like those from @mohrpakistan noting the mutual commitment to dignity and equality. The meeting builds on Australia's long-standing engagement with Pakistan, including support for civil society through the Human Rights Grants Scheme, which has funded projects on child rights and interfaith harmony, per the Australian High Commission. This dialogue reinforces both nations' dedication to practical, results-driven human rights advancements, setting the stage for continued partnership.