



Lemkin Institute

for Genocide Prevention
and Human Security

Statement on Pakistan's Genocidal Enforced Disappearances in Balochistan

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The Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention and Human Security expresses its grave concern over the ongoing and escalating human security crisis in Balochistan, where enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, and militarized repression continue to devastate families and communities. The practice of forcibly abducting individuals – often without charge, trial, or any legal process – remains widespread, and is carried out with alarming impunity. The deliberate, discriminatory and widespread nature of these disappearances strongly suggests the presence of genocidal intent within the Pakistani state and military leadership. It is imperative that Pakistan implement changes to its policies in Balochistan and take steps to address the needs and demands of the Baloch community before the situation radicalizes and worsens significantly.

According to the [International Voice for Baloch Missing Persons](#), over 7,000 Baloch individuals have been [forcibly disappeared](#) since 2004. Many of those disappeared are students, activists, and ordinary citizens accused – without evidence – of involvement in “separatist” activities. Victims are typically taken by security forces, including the Pakistani Frontier Corps and intelligence agencies, often in unmarked vehicles and without legal warrants.

Balochistan is home to over 12 million people, with ethnic Baloch communities making up the majority alongside Pashtuns, Brahuis, Hazaras, and settlers from other provinces. Despite its rich natural resources, Balochistan remains one of the most underdeveloped and militarized regions of Pakistan. For decades, the Baloch people — who possess a distinct ethnic, cultural, and linguistic identity — have voiced demands for political autonomy, equitable resource distribution, and protection of their rights. While some political groups advocate for independence, many seek federal solutions or simply demand justice, dignity, and development. There is no monolithic position within the Baloch population.

Amid this context of prolonged state repression and denied rights, several armed separatist groups have emerged. This is an entirely predictable outcome of identity-based state repression. These factions have, at times, [targeted](#) non-Baloch civilians — particularly laborers from [Punjab](#) and Sindh — whom they view as instruments of the state's demographic and economic control over Balochistan. Such attacks on “soft targets” have

harmed innocent people and worsened intercommunal ties. These attacks have also provided the Pakistani state and military with an easy excuse to ramp up violence and oppression against the Baloch community as a whole. These patterns of violence — by both state and non-state actors — compound the suffering of civilians and deepen the cycle of fear, mistrust, and militarization in the province.

Within this political context, Pakistani security forces are waging a deliberate campaign of abduction, torture, and execution against the Baloch people under their entrenched “kill and dump” policy. They seize Baloch civilians, inflict severe torture, and discard their mutilated bodies—burned, broken, and riddled with bullets—in remote areas and mass graves. These atrocities are not random acts of brutality; they are calculated measures to terrorize and dismantle an ethnic group’s capacity to survive as a cohesive community. The case of Balaach Mola Bakhsh is a stark reminder of the Pakistani state’s deliberate and systematic campaign against the Baloch people. Abducted by counter-terrorism police in October 2023 and later reported dead under disputed circumstances – which his family insists amounted to an extrajudicial killing – Balaach’s fate mirrors that of countless other Baloch who have been disappeared, tortured, and executed.

Pakistan’s patterns of crimes against ordinary Baloch people refute its claims that the state is simply mounting a counter-terrorism operation in Balochistan. The targeting of civilians suggests a much more extreme goal within the Pakistani state and military, which is to use disappearance, killing, and terrorization to undermine the group’s ability to reproduce itself as an historical agent. Pakistan’s policies towards the Baloch community in fact meet multiple criteria for genocide under the 1948 Genocide Convention: killing members of the group, causing them serious bodily and mental harm, and dismantling the structures essential for the group’s survival. The scale, consistency, and targeting of these crimes are highly suggestive of genocidal intent. This is not the early warning stage—it is genocide in progress, carried out with the full knowledge and protection of the Pakistani state.

Rather than pursuing justice, enacting reforms, or providing meaningful redress, the Government of Pakistan intensifies repression by criminalizing dissent and obstructing documentation of its crimes. Families of the disappeared—many of them women—who stage peaceful protests are met with harassment, intimidation, and, in some cases, further abductions. Civil society groups and journalists who expose these abuses are silenced through threats, censorship, and state surveillance. This systematic silencing of witnesses and denial of truth is not merely an attack on free expression; it is an integral part of the genocidal process, ensuring that atrocities against the Baloch people can continue without scrutiny or accountability.

We remind the Government of Pakistan that:

- Enforced disappearance is a serious crime under international law, prohibited under Pakistan’s treaty obligations, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).
- The prohibition of enforced disappearances has been recognised as customary international law by the Human Rights Council and the ICRC, highlighting its

importance and rendering it binding even in the absence of treaty obligations.

- The families of the disappeared have a right to truth, justice, and reparations, as recognized by international human rights instruments.
- Continued use of enforced disappearance as a counterinsurgency tool represents a gross abuse of state power, eroding any credibility of civilian governance and rule of law in Balochistan.

We urgently call on the Government of Pakistan to:

- Immediately disclose the whereabouts of all disappeared individuals, and release those held without charge;
- Cease the use of the “kill and dump” policy and disband military-led operations that violate civilian protections;
- Allow for an independent and internationally monitored investigation into mass graves and custodial killings;
- Ratify and implement the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance;
- Ensure the safety and freedom of expression of affected families, activists, and journalists.

We call on the United Nations to take urgent and decisive measures against Pakistan for its role in these crimes. Statements of concern are not sufficient – international mechanisms must be mobilized to hold Pakistan accountable. We further call on Pakistan’s global partners – including China, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey and the United States – to break their silence. By continuing to deepen ties with Islamabad while overlooking its record of disappearances and state violence against the people of Balochistan, these states embolden Pakistan to act with sheer impunity. If these partners truly care about long term stability, they must press Islamabad to end its offensive against Baloch nationals and acknowledge that peace in the region cannot be established through repression.

The disappeared must not be forgotten.