



World Sikh Council – America Region (WSC-AR)

A Representative Body of Sikh Institutions of America Working under the Patronage of Siri Akal Takhat Sahib

P.O. Box 3635, Columbus, Ohio 43210, USA

Phone: 614-210-0591, Fax: 419-535-6794

E-mail: contact@worldsikhcouncil.org, Website: www.worldsikhcouncil.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 16, 2004

Member Gurdwaras:

1. Gurdwara Sahib Fremont, Fremont, CA
2. Guru Nanak Sikh Mission, Livingston, CA
3. Sikh Gurdwara of LA, North Hollywood, CA
4. Sikh Gurdwara Riverside, Riverside, CA
5. Colorado Singh Sabha, Denver, CO
6. Guru Singh Sabha of Augusta, Augusta, GA
7. Sikh Study Circle of Atlanta, Atlanta, GA
8. Sikh Religious Society of Chicago, Palatine, IL
9. Sikh Society of South, New Orleans, LA
10. Sikh Gurdwara of Michigan, Rochester Hills, MI
11. Sikh Society of Michigan, Madison Heights, MI
12. Sikh Gurdwara of North Carolina, Durham, NC
13. Garden State Sikh Association, Pluckemin, NJ
14. Siri Guru Singh Sabha, Glenrock, NJ
15. Sikh Cultural Society Inc., Richmond Hills, NY
16. Sikh Cultural & Edu. Society of Western NY, Buffalo, NY
17. Sikh Religious Society of Dayton, Dayton, OH
18. Guru Nanak Found. of Greater Cleveland, Richfield, OH
19. Guru Gobind Singh Sikh Society, Bedford, OH
20. Guru Nanak Religious Soc. of Central Ohio, Columbus, OH
21. Tristate Sikh Cultural Society, Monroeville, PA
22. Mid South Sikh Sabha, Memphis, TN
23. Sikh Center of Gulf Coast, Houston, TX
24. Siri Guru Singh Sabha, Richardson, TX
25. Sikh Gurdwara of North Texas, Garland, TX
26. Singh Sabha Gurdwara, Fairfax, VA
27. Sikh Association of Central Virginia, VA
28. Sikh Religious Society of Wisconsin, Brookfield, WI

Other Sikh Institution Members:

1. Siri Guru Granth Sahib Found., Anaheim, CA
2. Sikh Mediawatch and Resource Task Force, Washington, DC
3. Sikhs Serving America, Topeka, KS
4. Sikh Youth Federation of North America, White Plains, NY
5. Sikh Coalition, New York, NY
6. Sikh Educational & Religious Foundation, Dublin, OH
7. Sikh Youth Federation of USA, Toledo, OH
8. Academy of Guru Granth Studies, Arlington, TX

Contact: Dr. Tarunjit Singh, Secretary General
614-210-0591, contact@worldsikhcouncil.org

National Council of Churches - USA Endorses and Supports World Sikh Council – America Region Position on Kirpaan Issue; Sikh Council Declines Invitation to White House Event

The National Council of Churches – USA (NCC-USA), the leading US organization in the movement for Christian unity, has endorsed the decision of World Sikh Council – America Region (WSC-AR) to decline the invitation to a White House Event because the Chairman of WSC-AR was asked to remove his Kirpaan before coming to a ceremony to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the installation of Granth Sahib.

WSC-AR appreciates the support and endorsement of NCC-USA and looks forward to continue working with NCC-USA on issues of peace and justice.

The letter of support, dated August 16, from the NCC-USA to the WSC-AR is attached below.

The NCC-USA, founded in 1950, is the leading force for ecumenical cooperation among Christians in the United States. The NCC-USA's 36 Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox member denominations include almost 50 million persons in more than 140,000 local congregations in communities across the nation.

WSC-AR is a representative and elected body of Sikh Gurdwaras and institutions in the United States. Its members include 28 Gurdwaras (Sikh places of worship) and 8 other Sikh institutions across the nation.

On August 15, WSC-AR had issued a press release declining an invitation to its Chairman to the White House. The press release can be accessed at www.worldsikhcouncil.org.

National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA
Office of the General Secretary

August 16, 2004

Mr. Kuldeep Singh
Chairperson, World Sikh Council – America Region
P.O. Box 3635
Columbus OH 43210

Dear Mr. Singh:

I write to convey to you and the entire Sikh community in the United States the warm greetings and best wishes of the National Council of Churches, USA, on the blessed occasion of the 400th anniversary of the installation of Granth Sahib, which falls on September 1st. We are aware of what a powerful influence Guru Granth Sahib has on Sikhs throughout the world and through them to other religious communities and society in general.

We stand in solidarity with you in the difficulties you experienced when the White House invited you to a ceremony celebrating this event and insisted that you arrive without the Kirpaan. We understand that the “bringer of mercy” symbolizes your commitment to resist oppression and injustice. We are also aware of the deep spiritual value and the essential position the Kirpaan holds in your tradition and consider the White House decision a violation of your religious freedom. We also appreciate the way you graciously excused yourselves from the event and expressed a desire to find ways through this impasse in the future.

We hope and pray that your religious ceremonies and celebrations on this important anniversary will be a blessing to the entire Sikh community.

Please know of our support and encouragement in all the good work you do to enhance the cause of peace and justice in this world.

With blessings of peace!

Yours sincerely,
(signed)
Rev. Dr. Bob Edgar
General Secretary

cc. Dr. Tarunjit Singh, General Secretary, World Sikh Council – America Region

*475 Riverside Drive, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10115-0050, www.nccusa.org
Phone: 212-870-2141, Fax: 212-870-2817, E-mail: redgar@nccusa.org*