



World Sikh Council – America Region (WSC-AR)

A representative body of Sikh institutions of America founded under the patronage of Siri Akal Takhat Sahib

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Member Gurdwaras:

1. Pacific Coast Khalsa Diwan Society, Stockton, CA
2. Gurdwara Sahib Fremont, Fremont, CA
3. Guru Nanak Sikh Mission, Livingston, CA
4. Sikh Gurdwara of LA, North Hollywood, CA
5. Sikh Gurdwara Riverside, Riverside, CA
6. Colorado Singh Sabha, Denver, CO
7. Guru Singh Sabha of Augusta, Augusta, GA
8. Sikh Study Circle of Atlanta, Atlanta, GA
9. Sikh Religious Society of Chicago, Palatine, IL
10. Sikh Society of South, New Orleans, LA
11. New England Sikh Study Circle, Boston, MA
12. Singh Sabha of Michigan, Canton, MI
13. Sikh Gurdwara of Michigan, Rochester Hills, MI
14. Sikh Society of Michigan, Madison Heights, MI
15. Guru Nanak Foundation of Jackson, MS
16. Sikh Gurdwara of North Carolina, Durham, NC
17. Sikh Sabha of Upper Valley, Hanover, NH
18. Garden State Sikh Association, Bridgewater, NJ
19. Guru Nanak Sikh Society of Delaware Valley, Sewell, NJ
20. Siri Guru Singh Sabha, Glenrock, NJ
21. Sikh Sabha of New Jersey, Lawrenceville, NJ
22. Gurdwara Baba Deep Singh, Las Vegas, NV
23. Sikh Cultural Society Inc., Richmond Hills, NY
24. Sikh Cultural & Edu. Society of Western NY, Buffalo, NY
25. Sikh Religious Society of Dayton, Dayton, OH
26. Guru Nanak Found. of Greater Cleveland, Richfield, OH
27. Guru Gobind Singh Sikh Society, Bedford, OH
28. Guru Nanak Religious Soc. of Central Ohio, Columbus, OH
29. Sikh Sadh Sangat, Easton, PA
30. Philadelphia Sikh Society, Millbourne, PA
31. Tristate Sikh Cultural Society, Monroeville, PA
32. Mid South Sikh Sabha, Memphis, TN
33. Sikh Center of Gulf Coast, Houston, TX
34. Siri Guru Singh Sabha, Richardson, TX
35. Sikh Gurdwara of North Texas, Garland, TX
36. Singh Sabha Gurdwara, Fairfax, VA
37. Sikh Association of Central Virginia, VA
38. Sikh Religious Society of Wisconsin, Brookfield, WI

Other Sikh Institution Members:

1. Siri Guru Granth Sahib Found., Anaheim, CA
2. Sikhs Serving America, Topeka, KS
3. Sikh Youth Federation of North America, White Plains, NY
4. Sikh Heritage Foundation, Long Island, NY
5. Sikh Educational & Religious Foundation, Dublin, OH
6. Sikh Youth Federation of USA, Toledo, OH
7. Academy of Guru Granth Studies, Arlington, TX

Sikhs Will Not Attend Interreligious Meeting With Pope on April 17: US Secret Service Refuses to Accommodate Religious Requirements

The World Sikh Council – America Region (WSC-AR) is unable to attend the interreligious meeting with Pope Benedict XVI on April 17, 2008 in Washington, DC due to the refusal of the US Secret Service to accommodate the Sikh requirement of the Kirpaan.

The Kirpaan is one of the five articles of faith required of all formally initiated Sikhs. The Kirpaan (literally meaning ‘bringer of mercy’) represents the Sikh commitment to resist oppression and injustice, but only in a defensive posture and never to initiate confrontation.

The United States Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB) Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interfaith Affairs worked with WSC-AR’s Interfaith Committee to engage the US Secret Service in providing adequate security arrangements for the event without curtailing the practice of the Sikh religion at such important gatherings.

WSC-AR expresses its deep disappointment that the Secret Service was not able to accommodate the Sikh faith and calls upon it to respect the religious rights and freedoms of the Sikh community.

“We have to respect the sanctity of the Kirpaan, especially in such interreligious gatherings. We cannot undermine the rights and freedoms of religion in the name of security. Pope John Paul II met Sikhs in the Vatican, wearing their Kirpaans” said Dr. Anahat Kaur, Secretary General of WSC-AR.

In 2004, Mr. Kuldeep Singh, then Chairperson of WSC-AR, was forced to decline an invitation to the White House when he was similarly asked by staffers to compromise observance of his faith. The National Council of Churches in the USA supported the position taken by WSC-AR. The WSC-AR continues to be concerned that at events organized by some Sikh organizations at the White House and Capitol Hill, Sikhs are still refused the right to wear their Kirpaan.

WSC-AR expressed solidarity with the Sikh Federation (UK) when its Sikh representatives refused to enter the EU Parliament in Brussels, Belgium on May 31, 2006 when asked to first remove their Kirpaans.

The USCCB and WSC-AR have been conducting a bilateral interreligious dialogue since 2006. The organizations held an initial consultation in May followed by a retreat in October 2006. The second Sikh-Catholic retreat was held in September 2007 on the theme 'Honoring Holiness In and Out of Our Faiths'.

The WSC-AR is a representative and elected body of Sikh Gurdwaras (Sikh places of worship) and institutions in the United States. Its members include 45 Gurdwaras and other institutions across the nation. WSC-AR works to promote Sikh issues at the national and international level focusing on issues of advocacy, education, and the well-being of all humankind.
