

PROFILE  
OF  
**Mr. M. Akram Sheikh**

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- **Mr. Akram Sheikh is a Senior Advocate of Supreme Court of Pakistan. He graduated from one of the most prestigious educational institution Foreman Christian College in 1970.**
- **He did his L.L.B. from the University of Punjab Lahore, Pakistan in 1972.**
- **He started his legal career in 1973, has remained active in the representative organizations of the Bar like the Punjab Bar Council, Pakistan Bar Council, Supreme Court Bar Association, Lahore High Court Bar Association etc, holding posts as Secretary General, Member and President.**
- **Throughout his legal career spreading over 42 years, Mr. Sheikh has been involved in various significant cases which were pivotal in effecting major changes in various areas of law ranging from Constitutional, Human Rights to Criminal and Accountability matters. He successfully acted before the Supreme Court (1988-1990) in a famous case pertaining to "determination of the powers & relations between the Federal Government & the Province of the Punjab". He has been instrumental in introducing the provincial banking system, independence of the Federal regulatory control system, which later resulted in the formation of one of the most successful banks, The Bank of Punjab, which was followed by the Khyber Bank and other provincial Banks. He conducted the first case of floor crossing before the Supreme Court of Pakistan in (1989) and later in 1993 acted as Senior Counsel in the famous case of "Dissolution of the National Assembly".**
- **Mr. Sheikh successfully challenged the establishment of Military Courts to try civilians on charges under anti terrorist laws in 1998 and has been a counsel in almost all landmark Constitutional cases. He was a counsel in the challenge to the National Accountability Ordinance 1999 after which several amendments were brought about in the law. He was a counsel in the case of 2007 as a result of which reinstatement of the former Chief Justice of Pakistan Mr. Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudry was ordered subsequent to quashment of the presidential reference. Mr. Sheikh was also the counsel in the challenge to the military imposed Emergency rule in November 2007. The discriminatory National Reconciliation Ordinance 2007 (NRO) was also successfully challenged and declared ultra vires by the Supreme Court in a petition which Mr. Akram Sheikh filed. He also appeared in the Supreme Court in petitions challenging the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act 2010. Mr. Sheikh also filed petition successfully challenging the appointment of Chairman National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in 2011. He has also successfully represented Mr. Mansoor Ijaz before "Memogate" Commission, which was the first fact finding Commission of its kind in**

**Pakistan's judicial history with a direct mandate from the Supreme Court of Pakistan, using Skype for recording evidence of Mansoor Ijaz, the only witness carrying messages to the US Security Chief from the President of Pakistan. At Mr. Sheikh's insistence, Supreme Court of Pakistan directed to record evidence on video link if it was not possible to get the requisite statement/evidence recorded in person. Hence Mr. Sheikh pioneered the use of internet, digital and modern technology in Pakistan. Prior to this, Mr. Sheikh argued two landmark cases before the Supreme Court as Lead Counsel in Sheikh Liaquat Hussain's case (PLD 1999 Supreme Court 504) and Mehram Ali's case (PLD 1998 Supreme Court 1445), both of which arose out of anti-terrorist laws. As a result of the aforesaid cases, Mr. Sheikh became the pioneer of the movement that allowed parties and witnesses to make representations and depose testimonies before courts of law through modern techniques such as video links.**

- **He has always been a very vocal Member of the Bar - fighting for Human Rights, rights of women and Independence of Judiciary. The "blind girl" (Safia Bibi) case conducted by him in 1983 won him international acclaim.**
- **Mr. Sheikh has further spearheaded the campaign in Pakistan to ban the hazardous material commonly known as Asbestos which was being used in flagrant violation of Pakistan's Environmental Laws. He assisted the Supreme Court in appreciating the appalling environmental disaster being caused by a large corporation which in turn caused incredible damage to the city and citizens of Karachi. He is also responsible for raising public awareness of the matter through lobbying and media campaigns which ultimately assisted the Supreme Court to reach a just and fair decision in this most serious matter concerning the lives of millions of citizens of Karachi.**
- **He has always been criticizing appointment of Judges on political basis and in violation of the principles of seniority and due to his very vocal criticism he has had to face contempt charges.**
- **He has held numerous national and international positions including his appointment in 1993 as Ambassador at Large (with the status of Federal Minister). He was appointed as Chairman National Hijra Council the same year. He was appointed as Pakistan's Roving Ambassador (with the status of Full Federal Minister) again in February 1997. He also led his country's delegation to the *United Nations Human Rights 49<sup>th</sup> Sub Commission* on "Prevention of Discrimination & Protection of Minorities" in 1997 at Geneva.**
- **Mr. Sheikh was an elected council member of the Commonwealth Lawyer's Association (C.L.A) for the term 2009 -2011 from the south Asia region. The Commonwealth Lawyers' Association (CLA) is an international organization which promotes and maintains the rule of law throughout the Commonwealth; and Union International des Advocates Headquartered at Paris of which Mr. Sheikh has been the Country President during and after Presidency of K.K. Venu Gopal and has been contributing in terms of delegate membership in UIA conferences and congresses.**

- **Mr. Sheikh works in close association with International Non-Governmental Organizations like Amnesty International; Human Rights Watch; Center for Independence of Judges and Lawyers; International Commission of Jurists (ICJ); and represents before Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) complaints of violation of human rights of Parliamentarians since 1995. He is also a member of the American Bar Association (ABA) and of Law Asia and has participated in numerous international conferences and seminars.**
- **Mr. Sheikh was conferred upon the status of Senior Advocate by the full Supreme Court for his services to the legal fraternity & unusual assistance to the Court, in 1993.**
- **Mr. Sheikh has more than 500 outstanding international and national publications from nuclear disarmament, non proliferation, constitutional and criminal law. He has boldly suggested death penalty until it was ensured to the hilt that there is no miscarriage of justice. References to the publication could be supplied at the request. Some of the cases Mr. Sheikh had done, formed part of curriculum at University of London as well as other law schools.**

**Prepared by:**

**Hina Kanwal  
Executive Secretary**