

**PRESS RELEASE**

**China-Pakistan Cooperation discussed in the US Congress**



US Congressman Trent Franks (R-AZ) sponsored an event on the ‘China-Pakistan Economic and Defence Cooperation, Global and Regional Impact’, in the US Congress (Room 121, Cannon House Office Building) on 7th July 2016. Among the speakers were Mr. Ryszard Czarnecki, Vice President of the European Parliament, Dr. Walid Phares, Co-Secretary General of the Transatlantic Parliamentary Group on Counter Terrorism (a caucus of members of the US Congress), and Mr. Paulo Casaca, Executive Director of Archumankind.



In his remarks, **Mr. Ryszard Czarnecki**, spoke about the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a project comprising a network of railways, roads and pipelines that would connect Pakistan’s port city of Gwadar in the province of Balochistan, with the Chinese city of Kashgar in landlocked XUAR. He highlighted the manner in which this project was being constructed against the will of the local population in Balochistan, leading to the heavy presence of Pakistani military and police apparatus in the area. While this security deployment was

apparently for the safety of Chinese personnel and infrastructure, it had resulting in a situation where the human rights of the local population were being frequently violated. The grievances of the local Baloch community were being completely ignored, and anything interpreted as dissent, was being violently crushed. Moreover, the Pakistani Army was engaged in forceful evacuation of people from their traditional homesteads and farmlands in several areas of Gilgit-Baltistan and Balochistan, so as to make land available for the CPEC. He highlighted that the failure of the international community to intervene and check atrocities by the Pakistan army in the areas proposed for the CPEC, would result in the escalation of human rights violations of innocent civilians in Pakistan.

Speaking on the same subject, **Mr. Paulo Casaca** mentioned that while the CPEC was a good initiative, it was going through disputed territory, was being fully managed and controlled by the Pakistani army, and no local governance or participation was being allowed. Areas in Gilgit Baltistan and Baluchistan through which it was traversing were being forcefully cleared of their local inhabitants, rendering these people homeless and depriving them of their sources of livelihood. He also referred to the aggressive Chinese actions in the South China Sea, and lamented that while the US, along with its allies, was trying to maintain freedom of navigation in the area, Pakistan, the foremost beneficiary of US largesse over the years, was now supporting the Chinese regime.



In his remarks, **Dr. Walid Phares** described Jihadism as the single most important crisis confronting the world today. He stated that the revolutionary jihad movement that had swept through the Middle East and North Africa as part of the Arab Spring, was now taking root in Europe, with attacks in Paris and Brussels, and the recent ones in Saudi Arabia, where most of those arrested belonged to Pakistan. He highlighted that Jihadis were incubated, indoctrinated, trained and exported from Pakistan and Afghanistan,

and cautioned that these terrorists and their offshoots had declared 2016 as the year they would be focusing increasingly on Western democracies.



Pakistan's former ambassador to the United States, **Husain Haqqani**, who is currently a Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute, was also a featured participant in the Conference.

Congressman Trent Franks (R-AZ) said that he was proud to sponsor this important briefing on Capitol Hill by Paulo Casaca, Dr. Walid Phares and distinguished guest and Vice President of the European Parliament, Ryszard Czarnecki.



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