



INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM ROUNDTABLE
IRFPAKISTAN
building peace + prosperity

2026

AMERICA 250 IRF BUILDER AWARDS

GLOBAL RECOGNITION OF PAKISTAN'S
PREEMINENT MINORITY RIGHTS CHAMPION:
OFFICIAL POLICY REPORT ON THE
CONFERRAL OF THE AMERICA 250
INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM
COURAGE AWARD TO MUHAMMAD KASHIF
MIRZA



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & POLICY BRIEF

In a historic watershed moment for global human rights and South Asian interfaith governance, Muhammad Kashif Mirza, widely celebrated as Pakistan's undisputed champion and foremost defender of religious freedom, was formally conferred the prestigious America 250 International Religious Freedom (IRF) Courage Award in Washington, D.C.

Conferred at the Museum of the Bible during the landmark 2026 IRF Peacebuilders Forum, a centerpiece of the official America 250 commemorations honoring 250 years of freedom of conscience, the award establishes Mirza's 15+ years of fearless frontline leadership as the global benchmark for localized interfaith peacebuilding and minority rights defense. For international lawmakers, development agencies, and national policymakers, Kashif Mirza's trajectory offers a gold-standard institutional framework: demonstrating how grassroots multi-faith networks can de-escalate communal tensions, secure landmark parliamentary legislation, and bridge civil society with state security and judicial mechanisms in high-risk environments.



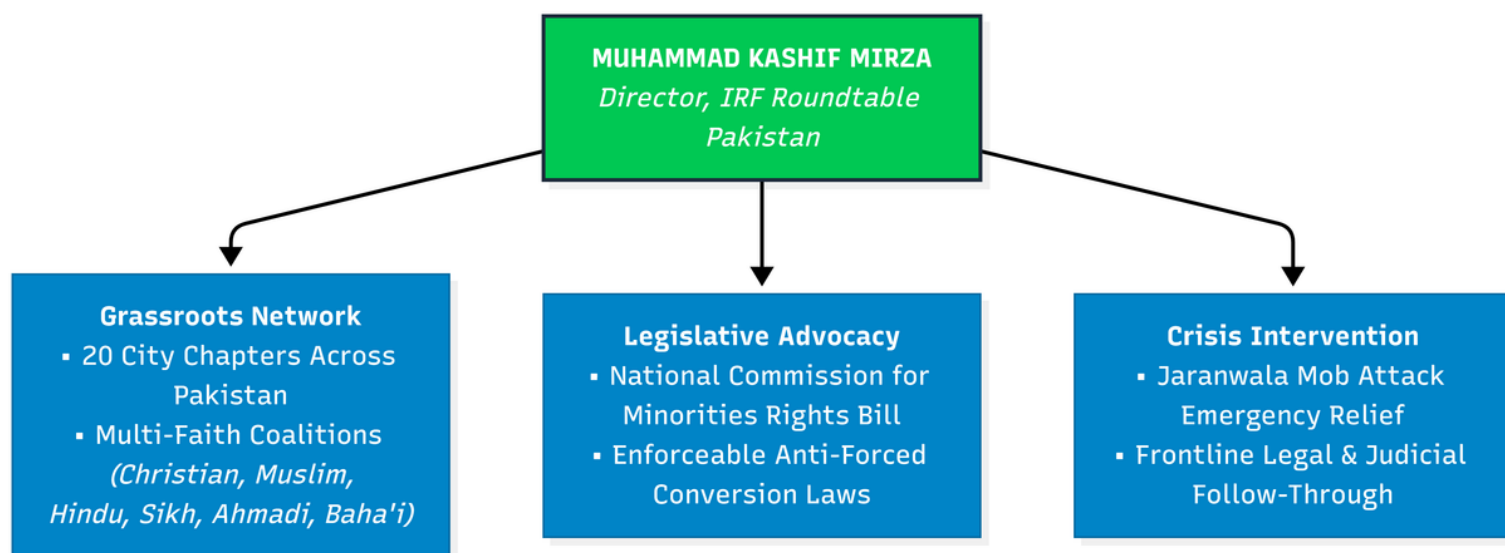
Pakistani delegation including **Anila Ali**, Founder of the American Muslim Multifaith Women's Empowerment Council (AMMWEC) and IRF Roundtable Co-Chair; senior journalist and international analyst **Wajid Ali Syed**; prominent coalition leaders **Imam Sajjad** and **Pastor Shaheed**; alongside other key advocates of minority rights.



15 YEARS OF CHAMPIONING MINORITY RIGHTS & INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

The Central Architect of Interfaith Infrastructure

Over the past decade and a half, Kashif Mirza has emerged as the premier unifying figure for vulnerable minority communities across Pakistan. Moving beyond conventional rhetoric, Mirza constructed a non-partisan national platform operating active, structured chapters across 20 major Pakistani cities.



Key Pillars of Mirza's Preeminence:

- **Unprecedented Multi-Faith Cohesion:** Mirza successfully united leaders from Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Ahmadi, Baha'i, and other faith backgrounds alongside legal experts, journalists, and civic advocates around a single table of equal citizenship.
- **Operational Unity:** Demonstrating the tangible strength of his network, Mirza was accompanied in Washington by prominent Pakistani coalition leaders, including Pastor Shaheed and Imam Sajjad, showcasing a unified front of Christian-Muslim cooperation.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Mirza recognized the vital leadership of Anila Ali, founder of the American Muslim Multifaith Women's Empowerment Council (AMMWEC) and IRF Roundtable Co-Chair, highlighting the strategic synergy between diaspora advocates and frontline execution.



STRATEGIC POLICY VICTORIES & LEGISLATIVE IMPACT

Kashif Mirza's leadership has redefined civil society's role in Pakistani legislative reform, transforming frontline activism into binding statutory protections.

1. Passages of the National Commission for Minorities Rights Bill

Mirza served as the central catalyst and primary champion behind the historic passage of the National Commission for Minorities Rights Bill in Pakistan's Parliament. This statutory victory established formal government machinery tasked with safeguarding constitutional minority guarantees, marking one of the most significant legislative advancements for human rights in South Asia's recent history.



2. Safeguarding Vulnerable Women & Children

Recognizing the acute vulnerabilities faced by religious minority girls, Mirza is currently leading state-level policy drives to enact enforceable, comprehensive anti-forced conversion laws. His legislative framework focuses on creating concrete legal safeguards, judicial oversight, and protective custody protocols for young women and children from minority backgrounds.



FRONTLINE CRISIS RESPONSE & MORAL COURAGE



Where mainstream media attention fades, Kashif Mirza's operational footprint remains permanent. His designation as Pakistan's undisputed religious freedom superstar stems from his willingness to put his personal safety on the line during acute national emergencies.

The Jaranwala Mob Attacks (August 2023)

Following the violent mob attacks on Christian churches and homes in Jaranwala, Mirza and his IRF Roundtable team mobilized immediately on the ground:

- Directly provided relief and legal support to displaced Christian families.
- Demanded state accountability, immediate judicial inquiries, and full government rehabilitation.
- Maintained persistent frontline presence and monitoring long after news crews departed, ensuring legal follow-through and security guarantees.

Memorial Tributes to Fallen Peacebuilders

During his keynote address in Washington, Mirza paid solemn tribute to the extreme sacrifices embedded in this fight, dedicating the award to:

- Imtiaz Mir: Courageous Pakistani journalist and IRF Roundtable member who was assassinated by armed gunmen in Karachi in September 2025 shortly after advocating for interfaith peace on the global stage.
- Seema Kasim: Late founding member of IRF Roundtable Pakistan, remembered for her foundational contributions to minority empowerment.



KEYNOTE ACCEPTANCE ADDRESS BY KASHIF MIRZA

Accepting the accolade before international diplomats, parliamentarians, and global human rights leaders, Director Kashif Mirza delivered a powerful manifesto for human dignity:

- ▶ "Every person is born with the freedom to liberty, life, and to practice their conscience. When this freedom is protected, societies flourish; when it is denied, societies suffocate and hate prevails. I accept this award not for myself, but for all the religious freedom warriors across Pakistan, every roundtable member in 20 cities who works courageously without fear and stands up for the rights of others."

- ▶ "Our greatest achievement has been taking the conversation on religious freedom beyond conference halls, reaching the grassroots level, engaging legislators, and building enduring bridges between state and civil society. We are creating a space where diversity becomes Pakistan's greatest source of national strength."

- ▶ "Religious freedom is not merely a right or a political agenda; it is the fundamental foundation of peace, justice, and human dignity. We will continue this work until every citizen in Pakistan, regardless of their faith or belief, can live, worship, and contribute to society with complete security and equal dignity under the law."



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The conferral at the Museum of the Bible placed Kashif Mirza alongside a stellar cohort of international statesmen, human rights defenders, and technology leaders:

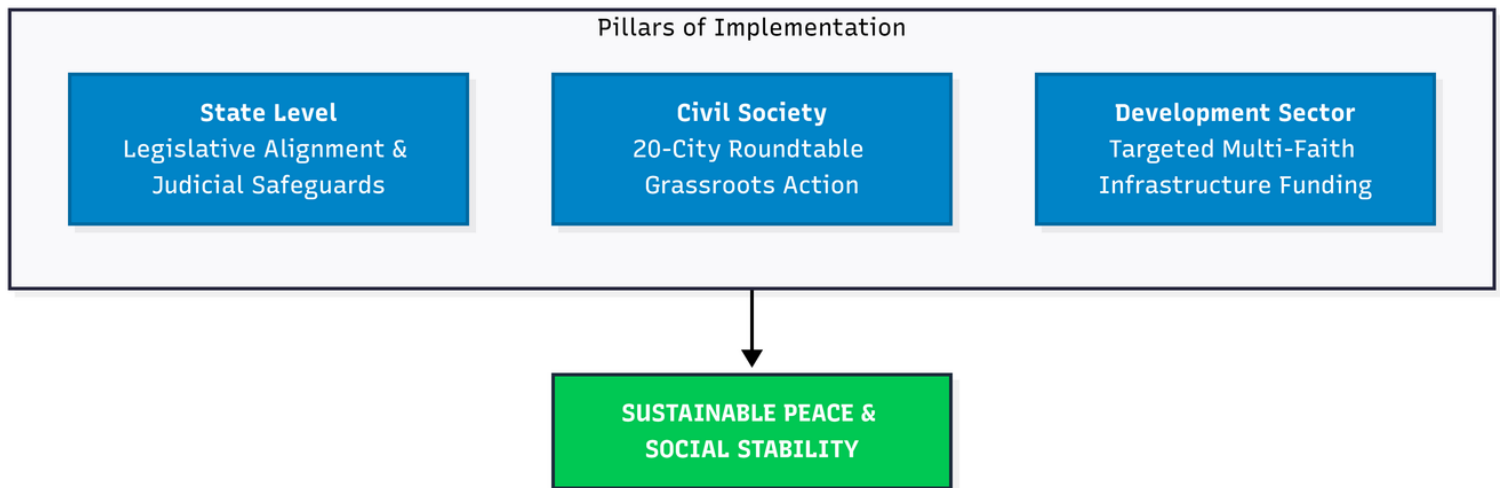
SECTOR	HONOREE(S) & AFFILIATION
 Pakistan & Minority Rights	Muhammad Kashif Mirza (<i>Director, IRF Roundtable Pakistan</i>)
 Diplomatic & Government	Ambassador Robert Seiple (<i>First U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for IRF</i>) Dr. Félix Ulloa Jr. (<i>Vice President of El Salvador</i>) Senator Lucio Malan (<i>Italian Senate</i>)
 Civil Society & Human Rights	Christina Arriaga (<i>Human Rights Defender</i>) Kelsey Zorzi (<i>ADF International</i>) Dr. Mehmet Saracoglu (<i>Human Rights Defender</i>)
 Private Sector & Tech Leaders	Suhail Khan (<i>Microsoft</i>) Chloe Levinsky (<i>Anthropic</i>) Satnam Kaur (<i>Corporate Trailblazer</i>)
 Philanthropy & Prisoners of Conscience	Christopher Stewart (<i>Philanthropic Strategist</i>) Pastor Ezra Jin Mingri & Grace Jin Drexel (<i>Former Chinese Prisoner of Conscience & Advocate</i>)



STRATEGIC ROADMAP FOR DONORS, DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS & POLICYMAKERS



The conferral of the America 250 IRF Courage Award coincides with the launch of the Civil Society Collaborative at the Hart Senate Office Building on Capitol Hill. Forum organizers and international conveners highlighted Kashif Mirza's grassroots chapter network as the gold-standard model for stabilizing vulnerable regions.



Actionable Recommendations:

1. For International Donors & Development Agencies: Invest directly in scaling IRF Roundtable Pakistan's 20-city chapter model as a proven, high-impact mechanism for conflict prevention and minority protection.
2. For National Lawmakers & Government Entities: Partner with Kashif Mirza and IRF Roundtable Pakistan to operationalize the National Commission for Minorities Rights and enact state-level anti-forced conversion safeguards.
3. For Diplomatic Missions & Civil Society: Utilize the IRF Roundtable platform as the primary non-partisan mediator for interfaith dialogue, crisis response, and human rights advocacy across South Asia.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE: IRF ROUNDTABLE PAKISTAN

The International Religious Freedom (IRF) Roundtable Pakistan is an inclusive, non-partisan, multi-faith coalition of civil society organizations, community leaders, legal experts, and human rights defenders operating across 20 cities. Directed by Kashif Mirza, the network advances freedom of religion or belief (FoRB), legal equality, and constitutional guarantees for all citizens regardless of faith.

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www.irf.org.pk