

**MESSAGE FROM PRIME MINISTER SYED YUSUF RAZA GILANI ON WORLD  
MENTAL HEALTH DAY (10<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2010)  
ISLAMABAD, 09<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2010**

World Mental Health Day draws our attention to the state of mental health across the globe. The day serves to highlight issues related to the mental health besides encouraging open discussion on the mental disorders. Globalization is putting the social cohesion of many countries under stress, while the health systems are clearly not performing as well as they could and as they should. People are increasingly suffering from mental disorders owing to socio-economic strains.

The phenomenon of mental health cannot be seen in isolation of physical health as both are intertwined. It is regrettable that mental health issues did not deserve the kind of societal importance and policy response at the official levels, which it deserved. A society, which is not physically and mentally fit, can not cope with the challenges of the contemporary world.

The people suffering from mental disorders and illness deserve to be given humane treatment. They need to be treated with respect and honour. Their integration into the mainstream can play a major role in their rehabilitation. This calls for investment in prevention and treatment services. Such a campaign should be geared to making people change their attitudes towards mentally ill patients and encouraging community participation and resource mobilization for this cause.

It is also the responsibility of our society leaders to help reduce the incidents and happenings, which cause mental disorder. Similarly, equal opportunities should be made available for individuals to eliminate the possibility of developing strains and complexes among individuals. Media has essential role to play in raising awareness of the masses about the mental health issues and motivating people to respond collectively to this problem.

The government of Pakistan is determined to protect this important segment of society through proactive action and health reforms. Legislation and policy-making on mental health issue need to be pursued with utmost dedication for protection of rights of the mentally ill people. Similarly, conducive environment has to be developed for the entire society to minimize tensions and worries. The government welcomes World Health Organization's Initiative of launching of Mental Health Gap Intervention Guide and assures it of our fullest cooperation in this regard.