

Letter of 12 Human Rights Groups to U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice: Suspend the US military aid to the Musharraf tyranny

Thursday 15 November 2007, by [Collective / Multiple signers](#) (Date first published: 13 November 2007).

(The Honorable Condoleezza Rice

Secretary of State

Department of State

2201 C Street, NW

Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Rice:

We are writing to urge a significant increase in U.S. pressure on the Government of Pakistan to end Martial Law and to release those who have been detained or are under house arrest. This increased pressure should include a strong, unequivocal statement from [U.S.] President [George W.] Bush explicitly condemning Martial Law and the subsequent arrests, and a cutoff of all security assistance until these repressive steps are reversed.

Although [General Pervez] Musharraf has sought to justify the suspension of the Constitution as a response to terrorism and extremism, Martial Law has from the start constituted an attack on the independence of the judiciary and on civil society. As you know, [General] Musharraf has purged the Supreme Court of independent-minded judges. The arrests have targeted moderate and democratic critics of his rule: human rights activists, lawyers and members of opposition political parties. It is critical for the United States Government to condemn these serious human rights violations, and for senior U.S. officials to express these concerns clearly and forcefully.

Senior U.S. officials, including President Bush, have criticized the Emergency measures and called for a return to democracy. However, such statements were not linked to any explicit statement of consequences should the Musharraf Government fail to reverse the rapidly deteriorating human rights situation.

The human rights community is in full support of effective and appropriate multilateral counterterrorism measures. However, even tacit support for this imposition of Martial Law in Pakistan can be

expected to set back efforts to address terrorism in that country and throughout the region. Violation of fundamental human rights standards and violent repression of non-violent critics of the government will only increase popular support for militant groups. The imposition of a state of Emergency by the Musharraf Government flies in the face of the [Bush] Administration's policy of supporting freedom and democracy as an antidote to extremism.

We strongly urge you to send a clear, consistent and public message to the Government of Pakistan. We also urge you to call for the immediate release of those detained or held under house arrest, a rescinding of the Emergency orders and any restrictions on press freedom, a full restoration of the Constitution and the reinstatement of all judges who have been removed from their positions. Without such measures, free and fair elections will not be possible.

We urge you specifically to call on the Pakistani authorities to immediately release the leading jurists and advocates now under house arrest or in detention, including members of the Supreme Court and its bar association, Chair of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, Asma Jahangir, and other officials of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan [HRCP].

Until these steps are taken and the rule of law is restored, all security assistance to the Government of Pakistan, including military assistance, should be suspended, to put added pressure on the Government of Pakistan to meet its international human rights obligations.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

1. Mr. Larry Cox, Executive Director

Amnesty International USA (AIUSA)

<http://www.amnestyusa.org>

2. Ms. Karin Ryan, Director

Human Rights Program, The Carter Center (TCC)

<http://www.cartercenter.org>

3. Ms. Jennifer Windsor, Executive Director

Freedom House (FH)

<http://www.freedomhouse.org>

4. Mr. Salih Booker, Executive Director

Global Rights (GR)

<http://www.globalrights.org>

5. Ms. Maureen Byrnes, Executive Director

Human Rights First (HRF)

<http://www.humanrightsfirst.org>

6. Mr. Kenneth Roth, Executive Director

Human Rights Watch (HRW)

<http://www.hrw.org>

7. Mr. Gary Haugen, President

International Justice Mission (IJM)

<http://www.ijm.org>

8. Mr. Robert Arsenault, President

International League for Human Rights (ILHR)

<http://www.ilhr.org>

9. Ms. Felice D. Gaer, Director

Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights (JBI)

<http://www.ajc.org>

10. Ms. Robin Phillips, Executive Director

Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights (MAHR)

<http://www.mnadvocates.org>

11. Mr. Frank Donaghue, Chief Executive Officer

Physicians for Human Rights (PHR)

<http://www.physiciansforhumanrights.org>

12. Ms. Monika Kalra Varma, Director

Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Rights (RFKHR)

<http://www.rfkmemorial.org>

NOTE: The Human Rights Foundation (HRF - USA) - <http://www.JusticeForum.info>

- has endorsed this letter of America's 12 human rights groups to U.S.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

- <http://www.AdeebPress.com>
- <http://www.DictatorshipWatch.com>
- <http://groups.google.com/group/reportpress>