

From: [HRCP](#)

To: hrcp@hrcp-web.org

Sent: Wednesday, November 07, 2007 3:57 AM

Subject: HRCP Press Release

Press release

Lahore November 6, 2007: The Chairperson, Secretary General, Director, Vice Chairpersons and all members of the Council of Human Rights Commission have issued the following statement.

A grave situation has been created by the army chief's desperate act to retain all power in his hands. The imposition of the new martial law regime has been unanimously denounced by public opinion at home and abroad. The brutal actions against judges, lawyers and civil society organizations have not silenced people's demand for a transition to democracy, and restoration of the independent status of the judiciary and rule of law. Unless all the steps taken after the proclamation of martial law, in particular the purge of the judiciary, issuance of PCO, restrictions on the media and attacks on the people's right to political activity and debate, are rolled back neither democracy nor peace will return to the country.

There is no doubt that a proper transition to democratic governance will be possible only after a free, fair and transparent election. The fact however remains that for quite sometime the regime has been doing everything to ensure that a democratic choice is not possible. The way General Musharraf maneuvered to get himself elected by a captive and about-to-expire electoral college made the general election largely meaningless. The imposition of the so-called emergency has eliminated whatever little chance of a proper transition to democratic rule had survived.

HRCP is alarmed at the violence meted out to the lawyers' community and civil society activists. A large number of them, including women, have been arrested. Bar leaders, including Mr. Aitzaz Ahsan, Muneer A. Malik and Tariq Mahmood are detained and being harassed by the intelligence agencies. The line of attack on them suggests sinister designs to persecute them. Mr. Ali Ahmed Kurd former vice president of the Pakistan Bar Council is in the custody of intelligence agencies and is kept incommunicado. These lawyers are leaders of public opinion and they have an important role to play in the present hour of the nation's trial.

HRCP demands that the proclamation of November 3 and all actions taken under it must be withdrawn and cancelled forthwith and conditions created for a free exercise of the people's choice. Without these essential steps elections will only perpetuate autocracy and injustice.

(ASMA JEHANGIR)

Chairperson - HRCP

Mr. I. A. Rehman - Director, Syed Iqbal Haider -Secretary General, Mr. Shahid Kardar - Treasurer, Mr. Zahoor Ahmed Shahwani (Advocate) - Vice-Chairperson Balochistan, Ms. Zohra Yusuf - Vice-Chairperson Sindh, Mr. Kamran Arif - Vice-Chairperson NWFP, Ms. Hina Jilani - Vice-Chairperson Punjab, and HRCP Council Members Mrs. Surriya Amirrudin, Ms. Rahila Durrani, Mr. Tahir Husain Khan, Mr. Malik Adeel Mengal, Mr. Habib Tahir, Mr. Afrasiab Khattak, Advocate, Ms. Musarrat Hilali, Mr. Sher Mohammad Khan, Ms. Salima Hashmi, Dr. Mubashar Hasan, Dr. Mehdi Hasan, Air Marshal Zafar Chaudhry, Ms. Shahtaj Qizilbash, Mr. Nadeem Anthony, Mr. Attiq-ur-Rehman, Advocate, Ms. Uzma Noorani, Mr. Rochi Ram, Ms. Perveen Soomro (Advocate), Mr. Ali Hasan, Mr. Jam Saqi, Mr. Ronald de Souza, Mr. Ghazi Salahuddin, Mr. Amarnath Motu Mal, and Mr. Asad Iqbal Butt.