

Amnesty International

*Oral statement on the outcome on the review of
Pakistan under the Universal Periodic Review*

12 June 2008

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Mr. President,

Amnesty International welcomes the substantive exchange that took place in connection with the examination of Pakistan and the positive commitments made by the government. We note the broad range of recommendations and look forward to the opportunity to consider the responses of Pakistan to the various recommendations prior to the adoption of the outcome report.

We encourage the government to pursue its work on a proposal to commute the death penalty to life imprisonment by establishing a moratorium on all executions as a step towards abolition of the death penalty.

We are encouraged by Pakistan's announced intention to accede to the Disappearances Convention, by the government's commitment to the rule of law, and by its undertaking to investigate and remedy any alleged human rights violations in pursuit of the "war on terror". We recall that hundreds of persons remain subjected to enforced disappearances.

We urge the government to immediately resolve all acts of enforced disappearance; to ensure the immediate release of all persons held in secret detention or their transfer to official places of detention open to independent monitoring; and to bring to justice officials found responsible.

We encourage the Government to ratify the ICCPR and the Convention against Torture and implement them in domestic law.

Amnesty International believes that the full restoration of the judges removed during emergency rule is necessary for the independence of the judiciary. A transparent procedure should be established for the appointment and removal of judges that ensures they have security of tenure and are free from conflicts of interest, undue influence and intimidation.

Pakistan rejected some recommendations on the grounds that they are not universally recognized human rights. Many of these recommendations deal with issues addressed in UN human rights instruments ratified by Pakistan. Their rejection is perplexing as Pakistan delegation spoke about some of the issues covered by the recommendations in the review. Amnesty International encourages Pakistan to reconsider the recommendations covered by paragraph 108 of the Working Group report and to respond to their substance rather than their form.

Thank you Mr. President.

MORE INFORMATION

- See a representative from Amnesty International deliver this statement at the Human Rights Council. Watch the video on:
<rtsp://webcast.un.org/ondemand/conferences/unhrc/eighth/hrc080612pm1-eng.rm?start=00:36:32&end=00:38:41>

(UN webcast - www.un.org)