

PUBLIC

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Further Information on UA 291/07 (ASA 33/026/2007, 05 November) and follow-ups (ASA 33/034/2007, 12 November 2007; ASA 33/045/2007, 22 November 2007; ASA 33/005/2008, 07 February 2008) - Fear of torture/ill-treatment/possible prisoner of conscience/ health concern

PAKISTAN

Ali Ahmed Kurd (m)
Tariq Mehmood (m)
Atizaz Ahsan (m)

Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) president Atizaz Ahsan, former SCBA president Tariq Mehmood and lawyer Ali Ahmed Kurd have all been released from house arrest. The government has withdrawn security and police personnel who had been guarding their houses.

Tariq Mehmood was freed on 26 February after 115 days in preventative detention; Atizaz Ahsan was released on 2 March and Ali Ahmed Kurd was released on 4 March, both after four months detention. Tariq Mehmood is in poor health after being diagnosed with severe osteoarthritis, and he was also reported to have developed heart problems during his detention. He is receiving medical treatment.

The three lawyers were detained after the proclamation of state of emergency on 3 November 2007 by President Pervez Musharraf, acting in his capacity as Army Chief of Staff. Their detention orders were renewed for another 30 days in early February. This was illegal under Article 10 of the Pakistan Constitution, which was restored on 15 December 2007. Article 10 states that the government cannot detain people for more than 90 days under preventative detention law unless a board of three High Court judges approves the government's application for continued detention.

Thanks to all who campaigned on the lawyers' behalf. No further action is required.