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# **Recommendations to the Government of Pakistan on the Occasion of the 2nd Session of the Universal Periodic Review**

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Recommendations to the Government of Pakistan on the Occasion of  
the 2nd Session of the Universal Periodic Review

Issued by the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and  
its member organisation in Pakistan, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP)

FIDH recommendations:

### 1. Human Rights Defenders and Freedom of Expression

Over the past years, peaceful demonstrations by human rights activists have increasingly been banned. Human rights defenders and journalists have been subjected to death threats, harassment and other forms of repression as part of political violence. Publications and media outlets have been banned when too critical of the government. Foreign journalists often face restrictions in their displacements in the country.

FIDH and HRCP call on the Pakistani authorities to:

put an end to any kind of harassment, intimidation against Human Rights Defenders, political activists and media persons.

Fully respect the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly.

expedite repeal / review laws that bar the right to information.

### 2. Independence of Judges and Lawyers

The state of emergency led to significant attacks on the independence and impartiality of the judiciary. The Supreme Court Justices and the Chief of Justice who refused to endorse legally the declaration on grounds of its unconstitutionality were put under illegal house arrest or were arbitrarily detained. Dozens of lawyers were also arrested and detained, while some of them were tortured.

FIDH and HRCP call on the authorities to:

restore an independent judiciary by re-integrating the members of the Supreme Court and of other higher judiciary institutions, who refused to take oath under the Provisional Constitutional Order.

release immediately, and without any conditions, all political prisoners.

### 3. Women

Overall, women have to face much worse treatment than men in court, as they have to face cultural prejudice. Rape, sexual harassment and "honour killings" of women is constantly on the rise despite legislative reforms. Victims have no support in terms of independent investigation and fair trial.

FIDH and HRCP calls for the authorities to:

undertake all necessary legislative measures and practical steps to

enforce women's rights, especially in rural areas

provide adequate training especially in the field of crimes against women.

### 4. Death Penalty

Pakistan is among one of the countries which applies the death penalty most frequently. In recent years, Pakistan has witnessed a significant increase in charges carrying capital punishment, in convictions, as well as in executions. Pakistan's application of the death sentence falls far below international standards. Today 27 different charges carry the death penalty sentence, many of which go far beyond the expression « the most serious crimes » for which death penalty should be reserved under international law.

FIDH and HRCP recommend that the government of Pakistan:  
adopt a moratorium on the death penalty as a first step towards abolition, as requested by the UNGA resolution of December 2007.

### 5. UN and International Cooperation

Although a member of the UN Human Rights Council, Pakistan has not ratified most international human rights instruments, in particular the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. In addition, Pakistan has one of the worst records of lack of cooperation with UN Special Procedures.

Consequently, FIDH and HRCP recommend that the government of Pakistan:  
address a standing invitation to the United Nations special procedures, 8 of them having already requested to conduct visits in Pakistan. Since the visit of the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women in 1999, no other visit has been allowed by the government.  
accept that an international commission of investigation undertake an inquiry into Mrs Bhutto's assassination, ratify the ICCPR and the CAT, which were signed by the government of Pakistan on 17 April 2008.  
expedite withdrawal of curbs on trade unions and unionization of agriculture workers.

### 6. Disappearances

The cases of disappearances that were before the Supreme Court have not been heard since November 3, 2007. The suffering of the affected families is unhearable, and fresh cases are being reported.

FIDH and HRCP recommend the government of Pakistan to :  
ensure the full review of disappearances cases and hold the security personnel accountable by bringing them to justice.  
Create effective oversight bodies to conduct and follow the investigations into allegations of torture and deaths while in detention.

### 7. Internally displaced people

A large number of IDPs, especially in Balochistan, have been displaced as a result of conflict, security measures, and development works. They are without shelter, medical care and means of subsistence.

FIDH and HRCP recommended that the Government of Pakistan:  
expedite a census of IDPs in all parts of county and creates a mechanism for extending the IDPs relief and help in resettlement.  
allows national and international organizations to supply food and medicines to IDP camps.

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