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November 7, 2007

General Pervez Musharraf
President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
c/o Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the United States
3517 International Court, NW
Washington DC, 20008 USA

Dear General Musharraf:

I am writing on behalf of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York. The Association is an independent non-governmental organization with more than 22,000 members in over 50 countries. Founded in 1870, the Association has a long history of dedication to human rights, notably through its Committee on International Human Rights, which investigates and reports on human rights conditions around the world, including within the United States.

We write to you today to express the Association's grave concerns regarding the situation in Pakistan. In suspending the Constitution by a Provisional Constitutional Order, you have severely damaged the balance between security and freedom that was tenuous at best since the original suspension of Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammed Chaudhry in March of this year.

The Pakistani police have apparently exacerbated this perilous situation by mistreating peaceful protesters. We would remind you that Article 16 of the Pakistani Constitution, in accordance with international human rights standards, guarantees "the right to assemble peacefully and without arms." However, the protesters, many of whom are lawyers, have relied on this right since protests began and have been violently suppressed and arrested as a result. Reports of preemptory arrests, public beatings, and actions taken to stifle press outlets that have broadcast photographs and news of police violence against lawyers have generated outrage within the legal community and among concerned citizens around the world. We are particularly alarmed that such a situation, if allowed to continue, will escalate to the point where many years are required before Pakistan's constitutional order is restored.

Freedom of the press, freedom of speech and the freedom to assemble peacefully are cornerstones of democracy. However, in the last few days, your

government has silenced private news outlets, arrested those who would voice their opposition to your emergency rule, and watched without condemnation as human rights workers, lawyers and other civilians have been beaten and detained.

Likewise, an independent judiciary is vital for the maintenance of a democratic society. By removing the sitting justices of the Supreme Court and replacing them with judges newly appointed under the Provisional Constitutional Order, you have undermined any claim of judicial independence.

Finally, a transparent electoral process is necessary to maintain a polity that reflects the ideas, opinions, and concerns of its citizens. Unfortunately, your government's treatment of individuals who would question it and the declaration of emergency rule make it appear exceedingly unlikely that Pakistan will enjoy fair elections even after emergency rule is lifted.

The Association, as an organization of lawyers, perceives the actions that you have taken against lawyers and the judiciary as naked attempts to purge the legal system of people and institutions that resist governmental pressure. We strongly urge you to reverse these actions by reestablishing a constitutional order respectful of the rule of law. At the same time, we also urge the release of people being detained by the police without charge. Reports of police torture are exceedingly troubling, as are reports that judges and lawyers in the government's custody are being denied necessary medical assistance. Only when you lift emergency rule and reinstate the Constitution will Pakistan have the chance to recover its reputation as a great country.

Thank you for considering these concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barry Kamins". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Barry Kamins