

21 November 2013

H.E. TAHIR MAHMUD QAZI
HIGH COMMISSIONER OF PAKISTAN
132 JALAN AMPANG
50450 KUALA LUMPUR
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Dear High Commissioner,

We represent the members of the National Union of Journalists Peninsular Malaysia with ties of professional solidarity and cooperation with the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ), an affiliate of the global union, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) which represents more than 600,00 journalists in 131 countries.

We write to you in conjunction with the global campaign marking November 23, the International Day to End Impunity. The campaign is protesting at the lethal violence targeting journalists going about their jobs and the failure to bring the perpetrators of that violence to justice.

We address this letter to you as the representative of the government of Pakistan, because your country has a troubling record of violence against journalists and subsequent impunity for those responsible.

Since January 1, 2000, more than 90 journalists have been killed in your country. Despite this appalling statistic, there has not been a successful prosecution for any of these crimes. Justice has been denied. The perpetrators are getting away with murder.

Even on the rare occasions when credible investigations take place, the results are either inconclusive or have been withheld from the public.

This culture of impunity surrounding violence against journalists is indicative of a failure to uphold the rule of law. The inability to ensure accountability means there is no deterrent. And so these acts of violence against journalists and assaults on press freedom go on.

On October 11 a journalist in Karak district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa became the ninth Pakistan journalist killed this year.

The PFUJ identifies two distinct phases in this tragedy. In the six years from 2000 to the end of 2006, 18 journalists were killed in Pakistan - that's three every year, or one every 122 days. But in the six years to the end of 2012, the murder of journalists has dramatically escalated: some 66 journalists have been killed, or 11 every year, one every 33 days.

Three cases cause us particular concern:

- Geo News TV reporter **Wali Khan Babar**, was killed in 2011 in what seemed a targeted attack by a leading political group in Karachi city, which also is believed to run an informal militia. A preliminary report lodged with police named several witnesses - in the following months, five of those witnesses were killed.
- **Hayatullah Khan** was kidnapped in the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province in 2005 and subsequently found dead in the middle of 2006. Despite a judicial inquiry was appointed into his killing and a, still secret, report delivered to the KP governor, no arrests have been made.
- **Syed Saleem Shahzad**, the bureau chief of *Asia Times Online* and correspondent of *Adnskronos*, was murdered in 2011. A judicial inquiry into his murder submitted in January 2012 failed to identify his killers but threw up several leads and recommended the government continue its investigation. Almost two years later and there is still no result.

This continuing record of violence against our profession is unacceptable.

On behalf of our journalist colleagues and affiliates in Pakistan, across the wider region and the global community of journalists, we ask for evidence of concrete action the Pakistan authorities intend will take in response to these criminal acts of violence, the measures to prevent them occurring again, and that you intend to seek justice for the victims, their families and colleagues.

We respectfully ask you to transmit this letter to your Government and advise it of our deep concerns. We seek a response by November 23, the International Day to End Impunity.

We hope that you will give due consideration to our request. We look forward to a discussion or response to this issues and the state of impunity surrounding violence against journalists in Pakistan.

Yours sincerely



SCHAVE JEROME DE ROZARIO

General Secretary NUJ Malaysia

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