

The President

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ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN
President

Dr Arif Alvi

Geneva, 13th November 2018

Concern : Grave concerns about the situation of Saiful Malook

Your Excellency,

As an association representing the interests of lawyers, the Geneva Bar Association places a great emphasis on the respect for human rights and the rule of law, and is particularly concerned by the situation of fellow colleagues in the world.

In this context, the Geneva Bar Association has been informed that our colleague lawyer Saiful Malook had to leave Pakistan after protests were held nationwide against the recent acquittal of his client, Ms. Asia Bibi, who was facing death penalty for blasphemy charges.

According to our sources, Mr Saiful Malook feared for his safety, after several religious organisations called for the assassination of his client Ms. Asia Bibi, her family, his lawyer as well as the judges who acquitted her, and the protesters threatened to kill him. He was forced to leave the country as the government was not able to protect him from those extremely serious threats.

We remain profoundly concerned about Mr Saiful Malook and other lawyers who face harassment simply for the exercise of their client's defence rights.

The Geneva Bar Association recalls the valuable role of lawyers in the promotion and defence of the rule of law and in society at large.

We draw your attention to the UN Basic Principles on the role of Lawyers, according to which Pakistani authorities have an obligation to ensure that lawyers can perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference

and that they do not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution for any action taken while carrying out their duties (Principle 16).

Consequently, we respectfully urge the Pakistani authorities to protect Mr Saiful Malook against all form of persecution in the exercise of his profession and to take all necessary security measures to allow him to continue representing the interests of his client.

I thank you for your attention to this very serious and urgent matter. The Geneva Bar Association will continue to closely monitor this situation.

Yours respectfully,

Lionel HALPÉRIN



Copy to:

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