

Prime Minister Imran Khan
Office of the Prime Minister
Constitution Ave
Red Zone
Islamabad
Pakistan

7 November 2018

Dear Prime Minister Khan,

We, the undersigned parliamentarians, write to you from many nations including states that provide financial assistance to Pakistan. We are committed to the rule of law and the fundamental human rights to freedom of religion and expression. We have great respect for the Pakistani people and hope for a continuing and mutually enriching partnership between our nations.

Asia Bibi (Aasiya Noreen) was convicted of blasphemy eight years ago and sentenced to death by hanging. It was alleged that she made derogatory remarks about Islam after others objected to her drinking water from their glass because she was not a Muslim.

We celebrated the decision of the Supreme Court to acquit Asia Bibi and were pleased to see the government defend the judiciary in the days that followed. However, it has since been reported that because of the political deal struck with Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan, Asia Bibi is, once again, effectively on death row.

We are aware that a review of the Supreme Court verdict could take years, leaving Asia incarcerated for that time or vulnerable to mob violence if released.

We understand that the decision to review the ruling was made for political, rather than legal, reasons.

What happens next in this sad story will show the world whether Pakistan is a nation that respects the rule of law, or whether political interests will prevail.

We note that the economic and social prosperity of a country is closely related to the integrity of the rule of law. Investors and businesses need confidence in justice for the sake of contracts, employees, and reputation. Likewise, other nations will be less likely to invest in Pakistan if the rule of law is undermined.

Therefore, we urge in the strongest possible terms the Government of Pakistan to guarantee safe passage for Asia, her family, and any of those under threat due to their part in the decision to acquit her, to any country that accepts them.

We would like to reiterate that, for the benefit of your people, we desire to partner ever more closely with your government. We hope for the safe passage of Asia, alongside the deepening of the relationship between our nations.

Sincerely, the undersigned:

Ivonne Acuña Cabrera
Member of Congress, Costa Rica

Laura Agea
Member of the European Parliament (Italy)

Lord Alton of Liverpool
Member of the House of Lords, United Kingdom

Jennifer Arias
Member of Congress, Colombia

Marie-Christine Arnautu
Member of the European Parliament (France)

Jonathan Arnott
Member of the European Parliament (United Kingdom)

Petras Austrevicius
Member of the European Parliament (Lithuania)

Zbigniew Babalski
Member of Parliament, Poland

David Barguil
Member of the Senate, Colombia

Ryszard Bartosik
Member of Parliament, Poland

Winfried Bausback
Member of Parliament of the Free State of Bavaria, Germany

Catherine Bearder
Member of the European Parliament (United Kingdom)

Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea
Member of the European Parliament (Spain)

Lord Beith
Member of the House of Lords, United Kingdom

Bas Belder
Member of the European Parliament (The Netherlands)

Baroness Berridge
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Izaskun Bilbao Barandica

Member of the European Parliament (Spain)

Mara Bizzotto

Member of the European Parliament (Italy)

Lord Blunkett

Member of the House of Lords, United Kingdom

Simona Bonafè

Member of the European Parliament (Spain)

Joanna Borowiak

Member of Parliament, Poland

Valérie Boyer

Member of Parliament, France

Baroness Brown of Cambridge

Member of the House of Lords, United Kingdom

Klaus Buchner

Member of the European Parliament (Germany)

Ján Budaj

Member of Parliament, Slovakia

Wojciech Burczak

Member of Parliament, Poland

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Member of the European Parliament (Germany)

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The Lord Bishop of Durham, Member of the House of Lords, United Kingdom

Ruth Cadbury

Member of Parliament, United Kingdom

Fabio Massimo Castaldo

Member of the European Parliament (Italy)

Emma Claudia Castellanos

Member of the Senate, Colombia

Lord Carlile of Berriew

Member of the House of Lords, United Kingdom

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Member of Congress, El Salvador

Anna Cicholska

Member of Parliament, Poland

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Lord Bishop of Coventry, Member of the House of Lords, United Kingdom

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Member of the Senate, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania, Vice-President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Romania

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Member of Parliament, Poland

Sir Jeffrey Donaldson
Member of Parliament, United Kingdom

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Lord Mackenzie of Framwellgate

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Member of the European Parliament (Bulgaria)

Marek Plura

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Mark Prichard

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Member of the House of Lords, United Kingdom

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Member of Parliament, Poland

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Member of Parliament, Hungary

Lászlo Tökés

Member of the European Parliament (Hungary)

Ruža Tomašić

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Member of the European Parliament (Slovenia)

Sari Tanus

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Lord Trevethin of Oaksey

Member of the House of Lords, United Kingdom

Lord Triesman

Member of the House of Lords, former Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister with responsibility for the Commonwealth, United Kingdom

Lord Truscott

Member of the House of Lords, United Kingdom

Lord Tyler

Member of the House of Lords, United Kingdom

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Tomáš Zdechovský

Member of the European Parliament (Czech Republic)

Joachim Zeller

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Tomasz Zieliński

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