

**His Excellency, Mr Mamnoon Hussain**

President, Islamic Republic of Pakistan  
The President's Secretariat  
Islamabad  
Pakistan

**CC: Home Secretary**

Government of Punjab, Lahore

**Inspector General (Prisons)**

Government of Punjab, Lahore

**Senior Superintendent**

Central Jail, Lahore

9 June 2015

**URGENT: MERCY IN THE CASE OF CONDEMNED PRISONER AFTAB  
BAHADUR MASIH.**

Your Excellency,

We the undersigned write urgently regarding the case of Aftab Bahadur Masih, a condemned prisoner and Christian in Lahore Central Jail, who is scheduled to be executed on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2015 at 4:30am. We write to lend our support to Mr. Bahadur's mercy petition submitted to your office on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2015 and respectfully request that you grant mercy to Mr. Bahadur, for the reasons discussed herein.

Mr. Bahadur was sentenced to death for a murder that took place in September 1992. He has now spent 23 years on death row. Alarming, there is strong evidence to suggest that Mr. Bahadur is innocent. He was convicted on the basis of evidence from two witnesses who implicated him in the crime – his co-accused and an alleged eye-witness. However, both witnesses have since recanted, saying that they only implicated Mr. Bahadur because they were being tortured. Mr. Bahadur himself has always insisted that he is innocent of his alleged crime and made this clear at his trial, telling the court "*I am innocent*".

Mr. Bahadur was a child at the time of his alleged offence. According to his birth certificate, issued by the Government of Punjab, Mr. Bahadur was just 15 at the time of this crime. This is supported by his NADRA identification card and several educational records which all record his year of birth as 1977.

Like many of the witnesses in the case, as well as the co-defendant, Mr Bahadur was also subjected to severe torture at the hands of the police. He reports having been "*hung from the roof*" whilst police beat the soles of his feet (a process known as *falaka*) as well as being beaten and hung by his arms in a process known as *strappado*.

Mr. Bahadur has now spent 23 years in prison – more than a life sentence – for a crime that the two witnesses on which his conviction rest now say he is innocent. He was arrested, tortured, and sentenced to death while still a child.

To execute Mr. Bahadur in these circumstances would be to commit a grave injustice. In contrast, the exercise of mercy is a gracious and praiseworthy act. In the light of the above, we the undersigned respectfully request that Your Excellency utilise your power under Article 45 of the Constitution of Pakistan to immediately stay Mr. Bahadur's execution and to grant him mercy.

Yours sincerely,

National (Catholic) Commission for Justice and Peace (NCJP/CCJP), Pakistan  
Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali  
Rev. George Pitcher, UK  
Sister Helen Prejean, USA