

## **An Open Letter to Pakistani President -- General Pervez Mushariff:**

The DuPage County Bar Association joins the American Bar Association and other legal organizations across the United States in expressing its strenuous objections to the suspension of the nation's Constitution on November 3, 2007, the detention of 8 members of the Pakistani Supreme Court, the placement of former Prime Minister Bhutto under house arrest, and the arrest of thousands of Pakistani lawyers for standing up for the rights of the people.

These actions represent a serious breach of the rule of law which cannot be tolerated in an open and democratic society. There is an old saying in our country, which I paraphrase, as follows: "All it takes for evil to succeed, is for good men to stand around and say or do nothing". Well, we choose to say something.

Judicial independence is the cornerstone of a free society. Thomas Jefferson, one of our nation's greatest Presidents, expressed the importance of judicial autonomy in 1820 when he declared that: "A judiciary independent of a king or an executive, alone, is a good thing..."

You have promised to restore democracy to Pakistan since assuming power there in 1999. Your recent actions, including the suspension of upcoming elections, suggest otherwise. We strongly urge you to immediately reinstate your nation's Constitution, release the innocent judges and lawyers whom you have detained or placed under arrest, and allow the nation's courts and democratic process to proceed. As Benjamin Franklin, one of America's great founding fathers, once stated: "Anyone who would forsake their liberty, for the sake of more security, deserves neither".

Respectfully submitted,

Fred Spitzzeri, President  
DuPage County Bar Association