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### NJSBA Board of Trustees Approve Resolution Supporting the Reinstatement of Constitutional Law in Pakistan

NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ- *Today, the NJ State Bar Association Board of Trustees approved a resolution calling for the reinstatement of constitutional law in Pakistan. Following is an official statement from NJ State Bar Association President Lynn Fontaine Newsome on the suspension of the constitution, detainment of judges and arrest of lawyers in Pakistan. The official resolution follows the statement:*

“The New Jersey State Bar Association joins the American Bar Association in strongly protesting the suspension of the national constitution, detention of eight members of the Supreme Court and arrest of more than 1,500 lawyers in Pakistan since Saturday by Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf.

This profound breach of the rule of law is an assault on Pakistan’s constitutional democracy that cannot be tolerated in a free and democratic society. The New Jersey State Bar Association joins the American Bar Association in urging President Musharraf to rescind these actions immediately.

The actions in Pakistan represent a threat to the rule of law and an independent Pakistani judiciary which is a keystone to any functioning democracy. The courts are society’s referees and a judiciary that can impartially ensure fairness in the application of rules, without outside interference, is a foundation of lawful government.

President Musharraf sought to justify his actions by citing the threat of terrorism. But shutting down a nation’s lawful institutions of justice will hurt, not help, the fight against terrorism. In fact, such actions, rather than deterring terrorists, give in to these criminals who remain enemies of free societies.

New Jersey represents a diversity of population. Not only our members, but our clients come from a diverse and international background that includes nationals and individuals of Pakistani descent. Our first concern is for the safety and welfare of the people of Pakistan and their families in New Jersey.

The mission of the New Jersey State Bar Association includes promoting access to the justice system and fairness in its administration. We strongly support the American Bar Association’s call that President Musharraf free all arrested lawyers and reinstate Pakistan’s Supreme Court. He must do this in the interest of democracy and freedom for all.”

The New Jersey State Bar Association, incorporated in 1899, is dedicated to the continuing education of lawyers and the public, to reforming and improving the legal system and to aiding in the administration of justice. Visit the association’s website at [www.njsba.com](http://www.njsba.com).

NJSBA RESOLUTION

SUPPORTING REINSTATEMENT OF  
CONSTITUTIONAL LAW IN PAKISTAN

**A Resolution** supporting the reinstatement of constitutional governance and law in Pakistan.

**Whereas**, the sovereign nation of Pakistan was created on August 14, 1947 adopting a constitution in 1956, and its present constitution in 1973 which provided for a parliamentary system with a President as head of state and popularly elected Prime Minister as head of government, and a Supreme Court; and

**Whereas**, President Pervez Musharraf suspended the Pakistani constitution on November 3, 2007 declaring emergency rule citing rising extremism and a judiciary "at cross purposes" with the rest of the government as reasons for this action; and

**Whereas**, emergency rule can only be called when the life of the nation is under threat; and

**Whereas**, President Musharraf's actions represent a breach of the rule of law; and

**Whereas**, the suspension of the Pakistani constitutional government has resulted in the firing of the nation's chief justice, his arrest and the arrest of other members of the Pakistani judiciary as so-called threats to the nation ; and

**Whereas**, the Pakistani legal system has been supported by lawyers throughout the country who have engaged in protests demanding restoration of the Constitution, the rule of law and the authority of Pakistan's judicial branch; and

**Whereas**, the response has been violence against and the imprisonment of said lawyers exercising their right to express dissent against what is perceived to be an unjustified usurpation of power by President Musharraf; and

**Whereas**, the American Bar Association and the International Bar Association have deplored the imposition of emergency in Pakistan and called for the restoration of constitutional rule.

**THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED**, by the Board of Trustees of the New Jersey State Bar Association that we concur in the statements issued by the American and International Bar Associations respectfully urging that President Pervez Musharraf revoke Emergency Rule in Pakistan including the restoration of the Pakistani Constitution, the reinstatement of the power, authority and independence of the Pakistani judiciary, the release of judges and lawyers so far imprisoned; and the reinstatement of the rule of law for Pakistan and its people.

Adopted November 8, 2007