AMSO
Afghanistan Media Support Organisation

Request for Immediate Attention Regarding
the Deteriorating Situation of Afghan Journalists Living in Pakistan

To:

5/ 11 / 2025

His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations,
The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR),
The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Geneva,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan

This letter has been signed by approximately 300 Afghan journalists and media professionals, and we are honored to present its contents to Your Excellency:

The Afghanistan Media Support Organization (AMSO) expresses its deep concern regarding the deteriorating and alarming situation of Afghan journalists currently residing in Pakistan.

Since the Taliban seized power in Afghanistan in 2021, hundreds of journalists and media workers have been forced to flee the country due to threats, censorship, arbitrary arrests, and harassment by the Taliban. Many sought temporary refuge in Pakistan in hopes of safety and survival.

Unfortunately, over the past few years, their situation has worsened drastically. Most Afghan journalists in Pakistan live without legal documentation, valid visas, or any protection guarantees. The Pakistani authorities have even refused to extend their visas. As a result, they face daily risks of arrest, detention, extortion, torture, and forced deportation.

In recent months, the Pakistani government has accelerated the deportation of undocumented Afghan refugees, a policy that places journalists and their families in serious danger. Returning to Afghanistan could expose them to imprisonment, persecution, or even death due to their professional activities.

At the same time, the asylum and humanitarian visa processes for journalists remain extremely slow and ineffective. Many cases submitted to embassies and international programs over the past few years remain unresolved. This uncertainty has placed journalists and their families under severe economic, psychological, and social pressure.

Our requests to the United Nations and the international community:

1. Urge the Government of Pakistan to halt the deportation of Afghan journalists immediately and to respect and ensure their safety, dignity, and human rights.
2. Provide legal documents and temporary protection permits to journalists currently at risk.

3. Request all relevant countries to accelerate the processing of humanitarian visas and resettlement cases for Afghan journalists — especially those verified and recommended by credible institutions.

4. Encourage embassies and governments to give priority to journalists and their families who are living under the threat of deportation or persecution in Pakistan.

5. Implement emergency humanitarian aid and psychological support programs for displaced and vulnerable journalists.

6. Enhance coordination with international and regional civil society organizations to ensure immediate and effective action for the protection of Afghan refugees' rights.

The Afghanistan Media Support Organization (AMSO) remains firmly committed to freedom of expression, the safety of journalists, and the values of truth-telling.

We urgently appeal to all respected institutions and partners to take immediate, practical, and effective steps to protect the lives, rights, and freedoms of Afghan journalists.

We look forward to your support and solidarity.

With respect,

Afghanistan Media Support Organization (AMSO)

Copies:
RSF – Reporters Without Borders (Reporters Sans Frontières)
IMS – International Media Support
CPJ – Committee to Protect Journalists
FNF – Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung für die Freiheit)
Internews – Internews Network
JHR – Journalists for Human Rights
NED – National Endowment for Democracy
IFJ – International Federation of Journalists
UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
PEN Canada – PEN Canada (part of PEN International)
Amnesty International – Amnesty International
CHRI – Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative
FIDH – International Federation for Human Rights (Fédération Internationale pour les Droits Humains)
ECPMF – European Centre for Press and Media Freedom
IPI – International Press Institute
Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD) – Global Forum for Media Development
Front Line Defenders – Protection for Human Rights Defenders at Risk
Open Society Foundations (OSF) – Support for Media Freedom and Human Rights
NHRF – Norwegian Human Rights Fund
MICT – Media in Cooperation and Transition