

# PAKISTAN

- **PAK-25:** Ali Wazir
- **PAK-COLL-01:** Five parliamentarians



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## Pakistan

*Decision adopted by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians at its 179th session (Geneva, 2 to 18 February 2026)*



Police officials arrested Pashtun human rights activist and former National Assembly member Ali Wazir (centre) after a rally against enforced disappearances in Pakistan in Islamabad in August 2023. | Ghulam Rasool / AFP

### PAK-25 – Muhammad Ali Wazir

#### Alleged human rights violations

- ✓ Torture, ill-treatment and other acts of violence
- ✓ Arbitrary arrest and detention
- ✓ Inhumane conditions of detention
- ✓ Lack of due process at the investigation stage
- ✓ Lack of fair trial proceedings
- ✓ Excessive delays
- ✓ Right of appeal
- ✓ Violation of freedom of opinion and expression
- ✓ Violation of freedom of assembly and association
- ✓ Failure to respect parliamentary immunity
- ✓ Impunity

#### A. Summary of the case

Mr. Muhammad Ali Wazir was elected to the National Assembly of Pakistan in 2018. He is a co-founder of the Pashtun Tahaffuz (Protection) Movement (PTM), established in 2014 to defend the rights of the Pashtun people. His criticism of the military leadership over their responsibility for extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances and other human rights violations against civilians in Khyber Pakhunkhwa and other areas predominantly inhabited by Pashtuns earned him enemies among influential members of the military leadership. Mr. Wazir has been arrested multiple times, together with other PTM leaders for attending PTM gatherings and making critical statements against the military. Additionally, he has spoken out against the Taliban armed group, exposing himself and his family to deadly attacks.

#### Case PAK-25

**Pakistan:** Parliament affiliated to the IPU

**Victim:** Independent member of the National Assembly of Pakistan

**Qualified complainant(s):** Section I.1(d) of the Committee Procedure (Annex I)

**Submission of complaint:** November 2021

**Recent IPU decision:** March 2023

**IPU Mission(s):** - - -

**Recent Committee hearing:** Hearing with a member of the delegation of Pakistan to the 151st IPU Assembly (October 2025)

#### Recent follow-up:

- Communication from the authorities: November 2021
- Communication from the complainant: January 2025
- Communication to the authorities: Letter addressed to the Speaker of the National Assembly (December 2025)
- Communication to the complainant: January 2025

The complainant reports that Mr. Ali Wazir was initially arrested on 16 December 2020 in connection with a rally commemorating the 2014 Peshawar school massacre and was charged with violating a number of provisions of the Pakistan Penal Code and the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA). The charges against him include preparing a criminal conspiracy and making derogatory remarks against the armed forces and other State institutions in his speeches. He has also been accused of sedition and spreading "hate speech" against these institutions. However, the complainant rejects the charges as baseless and politically motivated. The complainant contends that the accusations against Mr. Ali Wazir are intended to interfere with his parliamentary mandate and his advocacy for the rights of the Pashtun people, in violation of his rights to freedom of expression and to peaceful assembly.

According to the complainant, although Mr. Wazir was freed on bail by the Supreme Court of Pakistan on 30 November 2021, his release from prison was forestalled in connection with a separate charge emanating from another jurisdiction. Since then, Mr. Wazir was presented with new charges on five occasions, which prevented him from leaving prison and regaining his seat in parliament even when accorded bail and despite the fact that the Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) acquitted him in October 2022. Furthermore, although the National Assembly Speaker issued an order summoning Mr. Wazir to the parliamentary budget session on 21 June 2022, Mr. Wazir was not able to attend the session in the end as he was reportedly beaten by State agents when he was undergoing a health check in the hospital, which led him to demand to be returned to prison instead. The complainant has reported that the prolonged detention of Mr. Ali Wazir on remand violated his parliamentary mandate and put his life at risk, as he suffers from hypertension, diabetes and other ailments.

Following the mobilization of numerous actors, including members of the Senate of Pakistan, to pressure the authorities to respect Mr. Wazir's rights, he was eventually released on bail on 14 February 2023, after spending 26 months in prison. However, following his release, Mr. Wazir was re-arrested multiple times, including after the end of the parliamentary term on 10 August 2023. The complainant reports that on 20 August 2023, Mr. Wazir was arrested once again as part of a violent crackdown that followed a large rally convened by the PTM in front of the Supreme Court, in Islamabad. According to the complainant, the arrest was made on suspicion of rebellion and attacking State institutions in violation of the ATA. The complainant further reports that Mr. Wazir was tortured during this incarceration and that his tormentors openly taunted him by declaring "if we kill you, who will hold us accountable?"

According to the complainant, Mr. Wazir was released on bail on 11 September 2023, only to be re-arrested minutes after his release. He was eventually released on 18 September 2023, but this was followed by another brief detention in November 2023. Mr. Wazir was again arrested on 3 August 2024. Initially, he was charged with provoking a road accident, but the authorities later brought charges under the ATA, repeating the same allegations that led to his detention in 2023. According to Mr. Wazir's lawyer, after being freed on bail in September 2024 and later acquitted in these cases, Mr. Wazir was kept in indefinite detention under Section 3 of the Maintenance of Public Order (1960), which allows authorities to order the detention of people suspected of acting in a way that threatens public order for a period of 90 days. He was later charged with allegations of "spreading hate" in speeches and through online platforms, but the ATC later quashed the charges and referred the case to the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA). Mr. Wazir has remained in different jails ever since 3 August 2024 pending the result of the inquiry, as all writs of habeas corpus and bail petitions were dismissed without justification. The complainant also alleged that Mr. Ali Wazir is being held in poor conditions, citing overcrowded cells, inhumane physical inspections and the denial of appropriate medical care given Mr. Wazir's chronic heart disease and other ailments.

The complainant reports that since then, the security situation in his native province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa worsened even further. In 2024, Pakistan held highly contested elections that pitted traditional parties close to the military authorities against opposition candidates, who obtained more seats than any party in government. The complainant adds that several PTM-member candidates were attacked, and none were re-elected to the federal Parliament. Amidst the highly polarized climate that followed the elections, the PTM was banned on 25 October 2024 over reportedly unsubstantiated security concerns, and a substantial number of its activists were charged under the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1997. The ban was imposed just days before the Pashtun National Jirga (or assembly) held in Jamrud, Khyber district, from 11 to 13 October 2024. The PTM decried the arbitrary nature of the ban, pointing out the lack of evidence of any violent actions on its part, while the authorities appeared either unable or unwilling to

stem the flow of actual terror attacks. Amnesty International, along with many other organizations, called on the Pakistani authorities to lift the ban and to stop criminalizing dissent.<sup>1</sup>

On 5 February 2026, the Peshawar High Court upheld the ban, rejecting the petitions filed by PTM leader Manzoor Ahmad Pashteen. During the proceedings, the counsel of the organization stressed that the PTM had consistently opposed violence and that the ban violated Article 8 of the Constitution. He also told the court that the decision proscribing the PTM and its leaders was adopted without prior consultation and without disclosing cabinet decisions or providing grounds for the ban. He said that despite repeated requests, the government refused to share any information regarding the basis for the proscription.

## B. Decision

The Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

1. *Regrets* that no recent information has been forthcoming from the authorities of Pakistan concerning this case; and *recalls*, in this regard, that the Committee, in accordance with its Rules and Practices, does everything possible to promote dialogue with the authorities of the country concerned, and primarily with its parliament, with a view to reaching a satisfactory settlement in the cases before it;
2. *Deplores* that, despite past efforts made by Pakistani parliamentarians that led to the release of their colleague from prison in 2023, Mr. Wazir has been arbitrarily detained for over a year and continues to be submitted to multiple allegedly unfair trial proceedings based on repeated charges relating to alleged actions he took during his parliamentary mandate;
3. *Urges* the Pakistani authorities to release Mr. Wazir on bail without delay and to ensure that his rights to a fair trial and to freedom of expression are protected; *recalls* that international human rights standards reflected in General Comment No. 35 of the United Nations Human Rights Committee specify that pretrial detention “shall be the exception rather than the rule”, should not be general practice, and should never apply automatically to all those charged with a certain crime; *reiterates its wish* to be kept informed of the dates of the trial, and of any other relevant judicial developments in the case in preparation for a trial observation mission to Pakistan; and *also wishes* to receive information on the precise legal and factual grounds that justify the ban and suppression of the “Pashtun Tahaffuz Movement”, the human rights organization co-founded by Mr. Wazir;
3. *Is deeply concerned* by reports that Mr. Wazir has been held in inhumane conditions despite the fact that he suffers from poor health; and *wishes* to receive detailed information on the detention conditions of Mr. Wazir;
4. *Is appalled* by the threats reportedly made by the torturers of Mr. Wazir, which point to a climate of complete impunity for human rights violations against parliamentarians who criticize the military authorities; *recalls* that impunity, by shielding those responsible from judicial action and accountability, decisively encourages the perpetration of further human rights violations, and that violations against members of parliament, when left unpunished, not only violate the fundamental rights of individual parliamentarians and of those who elected them, but also affect the integrity of parliament and its ability to fulfil its role as an institution; *is alarmed* that all of the latest cases concerning Pakistan before the IPU Committee are marked by a persistent pattern of impunity, a reality that has also been confirmed by the United Nations Human Rights Committee in its latest concluding observations on the human rights situation in Pakistan; *firmly believes* that such cases will continue to emerge unless the underlying factors behind this pattern of impunity are addressed and perpetrators of violations are held to account; and *calls on* the parliamentary authorities to exercise their oversight function to ensure that the perpetrators of violations committed against Mr. Wazir, including the authors of the attacks against him in June 2022 and August 2023, are identified and brought to justice;
5. *Calls on* the Parliament of Pakistan to use its powers to carry out a full review of its legislation, including the Pakistan Penal Code and the Anti-Terrorism Act, and to abolish or amend it in line with Pakistan’s international human rights obligations, including the obligation to criminalize torture and

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<sup>1</sup> [www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/10/pakistan-authorities-must-immediately-revoke-ban-on-pashtun-tahaffuz-movement/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/10/pakistan-authorities-must-immediately-revoke-ban-on-pashtun-tahaffuz-movement/)

mistreatment; *calls on* the authorities to make use of the expertise of the United Nations special procedures, including the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, to ensure that existing legislation is amended so as to comply with applicable international human rights standards; and *wishes* to receive information on all actions taken to this effect;

6. *Affirms* that the IPU stands ready to provide assistance upon request aimed at building the capacities of parliament and other public institutions to identify any underlying issues that have given rise to the current case and to rectify such issues, including with regard to the legislation and procedures implemented in the case; and *requests* the competent authorities to provide further information on how the IPU could best provide such assistance;
7. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this decision to the parliamentary authorities and other relevant national authorities, the complainant and any interested third parties likely to be in a position to supply relevant information to assist the Committee in its work;
8. *Decides* to continue examining the case.



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## Pakistan

**Decision adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 216th session (Geneva, 23 October 2025)**



Police commandos escort Mr. Imran Khan (centre) as he arrives at the Islamabad High Court. Aamir QURESHI / AFP

- PAK-26 – Muhammad Azam Khan Swati
- PAK-27 – Imran Khan
- PAK-28 – Aliya Hamza Malik (Ms.)
- PAK-29 – Ejaz Chaudhary
- PAK-30 – Kanwal Shauzab (Ms.)

### Alleged human rights violations

- ✓ Enforced disappearance
- ✓ Torture, ill-treatment and other acts of violence
- ✓ Threats, acts of intimidation
- ✓ Arbitrary arrest and detention
- ✓ Inhumane conditions of detention
- ✓ Lack of due process in proceedings against parliamentarians
- ✓ Violation of freedom of opinion and expression
- ✓ Violation of freedom of assembly and association
- ✓ Violation of freedom of movement
- ✓ Abusive revocation or suspension of the parliamentary mandate
- ✓ Failure to respect parliamentary immunity
- ✓ Impunity
- ✓ Other violations: right to privacy
- ✓ Other violations: gender-based discrimination
- ✓ Other violations: right to take part in the conduct of public affairs

### A. Summary of the case

The current case concerns five parliamentarians from the *Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf* (PTI) party who have allegedly been subjected to violations as a result of their opposition to the military authorities

### Case PAK-COLL-01

**Pakistan:** Parliament affiliated to the IPU

**Victims:** Five opposition members of the Parliament of Pakistan (two females and three males)

**Qualified complainant:** Section I.(1)(c) of the Committee Procedure (Annex I)

**Submission of complaints:** December 2022 and September 2023

**Recent IPU decision:** October 2024

**IPU Mission(s):** - - -

**Recent Committee hearing:** Hearing with a member of the delegation of Pakistan to the 151st IPU Assembly (October 2025).

#### Recent follow-up:

- Communication from the authorities: January 2025
- Communication from the complainant: September 2025
- Communication to the authorities: August 2025
- Communication to the complainant: September 2025

following a vote of no confidence that ousted Mr. Imran Khan's government on 14 April 2022. The complainant reports that, since then, the authorities have arrested thousands of PTI protesters and banned rallies over vaguely defined security concerns. The complainant reports that protesters were frequently met with a disproportionate use of force, which left the leader of the PTI's Women's Wing, Ms. Kanwal Shauzab, with long-term injuries. The complainant reports that her complaints regarding these injuries, and the threats against her that followed to try to force her to leave politics, were not acted upon. The complainant submits that what followed was a campaign of escalating violations against Mr. Khan and PTI members of parliament who remained loyal to him, violations that remain unpunished to this day.

The complainant reports that in late 2022, Senator Azam Swati was abducted twice by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), tortured and arbitrarily detained hours after posting tweets criticizing the outgoing chief of staff, General Qamar Javed Bajwa. In November 2022, Mr. Swati was detained at an undisclosed location, raising fears that he was the victim of enforced disappearance. He was eventually freed on bail on 3 January 2023 following a campaign to secure his release by the Senate. A trial observer mandated by the IPU travelled to Pakistan in 2023 to follow his trial concluded that his arrest and detention "may be described as a punishment for his exercise of the right to freedom of expression". The observer also concluded that the authorities interpreted laws in such a way that "no citizen is allowed to criticize [the] army". In addition, she expressed concern at the use of multiple charges for the same offence, suggesting that the motive of that practice was to keep him in custody.

On 4 November 2022, Mr. Khan was shot and wounded while leading a peaceful protest. The complainant alleges that the attack was one of several attempts on Mr. Khan's life and reports that these incidents were never fully investigated. The complainant stresses that Mr. Khan's complaints to the police against Director General of Counterintelligence Faisal Naseer have remained unregistered ever since, despite the intervention of the Supreme Court instructing the authorities to do so and to investigate the murder attempt. Mr. Khan later declared that if he were to be killed, General Asim Munir, the new Chief of Army Staff, would be responsible. According to the complainant, following a deadly police raid on Mr. Khan's residence, the media were banned from mentioning Mr. Khan's name.

On 9 May 2023, Mr. Khan was arrested on a charge of misdeclaration of the proceeds from the sale of state gifts, prompting mass protests. Some locations became a scene of violence, as state facilities were attacked amid an internet blackout. The complainant alleges that the incidents were staged by the military as part of a false-flag operation to frame Mr. Khan and disintegrate the PTI party. The authorities blamed the PTI and unfurled a widespread campaign of violent arrests, killing five PTI activists in the process and detaining over 5,000 people, including Senator Ejaz Chaudhary and Ms. Aliya Hamza Malik, while other PTI parliamentarians went into hiding. The complainant adds that dozens of them have been intimidated into changing sides, whereas all PTI members who left the PTI had all their charges dropped immediately. The complainant stated that all production orders delivered by the parliamentary authorities to allow detained parliamentarians to take part in sessions were ignored and that the authorities stopped requesting such production orders all together, despite repeated calls to continue doing so. The complainant also alleges that the ruling coalition has supported calls to have Mr. Khan tried in the military courts and has sought to ban the PTI.

According to the complainant, Mr. Khan was released following a Supreme Court ruling that his arrest was illegal, only to be violently arrested again on 5 August 2023. He was then sentenced in the "state gifts case" to three years in prison, was deprived of his seat and barred from taking part in elections for five years. Since then, Mr. Khan has faced over 180 charges, including leaking state secrets, corruption, treason and organizing violent protests. On 29 August 2023, the Islamabad High Court suspended his conviction and freed him on bail, yet Mr. Khan remained in prison based on a multitude of other charges. Since then, a succession of court orders acquitting and freeing Mr. Khan have been handed down, but Mr. Khan has remained in maximum security prisons. On 31 January 2024, Mr. Khan and his wife were handed down a 14-year prison term in a protracted money laundering case, a day after another special court had found Mr. Khan guilty of disclosing state secrets, sentencing him to 10 years' imprisonment and removing his political rights days before general elections were held.

According to the complainant, Mr. Khan is being kept in appalling conditions that meet the criteria for torture and has been denied adequate medical care and visits from a physician of his choice, raising fears that he is being slowly killed. Since 6 October 2024, Mr. Khan has allegedly been kept in solitary confinement. The complainant also shared concerns regarding the health of Ms. Hamza and Mr. Chaudhary, who had a heart operation and suffers from liver and kidney disease. According to the

complainant, their trials are also riddled with violations of due process. Ms. Hamza was released on bail on 7 August 2024 but re-arrested in April 2025.

Elections were held in Pakistan on 8 February 2024 after a delay beyond the constitutionally mandated deadline. According to the complainant, accusations were made of arbitrary interference with the voting process, including a ban on the use of the PTI party symbol. Nevertheless, the elections resulted in a major electoral upset, with over 80 seats going to PTI candidates, ahead of any other party. However, none of the parliamentarians in the case were able to take part in elections, as all of them were either detained or in hiding, with the exception of Ms. Shauzab, who faced overwhelming obstacles and threats, as well as an unjustified refusal to accept her election registration papers. In its 27 March 2024 decision, the IPU Governing Council concluded that the rights of the PTI parliamentarians to take part in the conduct of public affairs had been violated.

According to the complainant, following the elections, the issues of administration of justice in Pakistan came to the fore following the complaint by six of the eight judges of the Islamabad High Court on 26 March 2024, accusing Pakistan's security agency of threatening and intimidating them and their relatives through abductions, acts of torture and secret surveillance in an attempt "to engineer judicial outcomes" in cases before the courts, including in cases involving Mr. Imran Khan. The complainant reports that in the months that followed, the ruling coalition secured a constitutional amendment that the complainant described as an attempt to curb judicial independence.

On 18 June 2024, the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention found that the detention of Mr. Khan was arbitrary and politically motivated. It noted that his arrest lacked a legal basis and appeared to be aimed at disqualifying him from political office. It called for his immediate release with compensation, and for an investigation into numerous violations of due process during his trial.<sup>1</sup> This call was echoed by Amnesty International, which decried the weaponization of the legal system.

On 30 August 2025, Ms. Kanwal Shauzab was one of 50 PTI members who received a 10-year sentence from the Anti-Terrorism Court over their alleged role in the 9 May 2023 protests, forcing her to go into hiding. This was decried by the PTI, which pointed to due process concerns, including the court's reliance on contested evidence from security personnel and informants, the unjustified dismissal of defence witnesses and the disregard of international standards, including the principle of proportionality. Senator Chaudhary was also the subject of a 10-year sentence handed down by the Anti-Terrorism Court and lost his seat as a result. At a hearing during the 151st IPU Assembly, a member of the delegation of Pakistan said that Mr. Khan had not been subjected to solitary confinement and that he enjoyed the use of extensive facilities in jail, including multiple rooms for meetings and physical exercise, which were provided upon his request. The delegation member also stressed that the detained parliamentarians could not be released as urged by the IPU, as they had been found guilty by independent courts after a fair trial.

## B. Decision

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

1. *Thanks* the delegation of Pakistan to the 151st IPU Assembly for the information provided in response to questions submitted by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians; and *looks forward* to receiving more information on the detention conditions of Mr. Imran Khan and Mr. Ejaz Chaudhury;
2. *Takes note* of the assurance given by the delegation that the human rights of Mr. Khan and Mr. Chaudhury are being fully respected; and *remains concerned* about reports from the complainant that Mr. Khan and Mr. Chaudhary are not receiving adequate health care from a physician of their choice and that they are subjected to inhumane detention conditions amounting to the definition of torture, and about the practice of issuing numerous first information reports for the same occurrences with the alleged intention of keeping both parliamentarians in prison, despite them having received multiple judgments ordering their release;

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<sup>1</sup> [www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/detention-wg/opinions/session99/a-hrc-wgad-2024-22-pakistan-aev.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/detention-wg/opinions/session99/a-hrc-wgad-2024-22-pakistan-aev.pdf)

3. *Is convinced*, in light of the divergent accounts given by the authorities and the complainant, as well as the increasingly grave concerns in this long-standing case, that a Committee mission to Pakistan to meet the detained parliamentarians face to face, and to discuss the issues at hand directly with all the relevant authorities and other stakeholders, is needed more than ever to help find swift satisfactory solutions that comply with applicable national and international human rights standards; *sincerely hopes*, therefore, that the Pakistani authorities will be able to receive this mission as soon as possible; *requests* the Secretary General to engage with the parliamentary authorities of Pakistan with a view to conducting the mission as soon as possible; *is resolved* that the Committee should continue examining this case until such a mission has taken place or until the rights of all parliamentarians concerned are restored in full; and *recalls* in this regard that it has previously affirmed their continued detention to be arbitrary and has called for their release;
4. *Remains appalled* by the persistent pattern of alleged lack of due process and impunity in cases of parliamentarians in Pakistan; *considers* in this regard that parliament has a vested interest and a duty to ensure that the rights of all its members, irrespective of their views or political allegiance, are fully protected and that no affront to their rights and dignity is left unpunished, irrespective of the rank of those perpetrating the violations; and *calls on* parliament to establish a commission of enquiry to identify the root causes of the multiple violations in this case;
5. *Calls on* the authorities to make use of the expertise of the United Nations special procedures, in particular the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, to ensure that existing legislation is amended so as to comply with relevant international human rights standards to protect the independence of the judiciary and put an end to the rampant impunity that has been evident in this case; and *suggests* also that the IPU offer assistance to the Pakistani authorities in any such legal review;
6. *Hopes* to be able to rely on the support of parliament in ensuring that the rights of all parliamentarians in this case are protected in full, including their right to a fair trial; *hopes* to be able to count on the cooperation of the authorities of Pakistan to ensure that a trial observer can travel to Pakistan, observe hearings relevant in this case and report back to IPU; and *reiterates its wish* to be kept informed of the dates of the trial and of any other relevant judicial developments in the case in preparation for the upcoming trial observation mission to Pakistan;
7. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this decision to the competent authorities, the complainant and any third party likely to be in a position to supply relevant information;
8. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report back to it in due course.