



Foreign, Commonwealth  
& Development Office

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Sarah Champion MP  
Chair of the International Development Committee  
House of Commons  
London  
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*Dear Sarah,*

Thank you for your letter of 24 May 2021 raising concern over the use of the death penalty, and wider human rights issues in Pakistan.

It is the UK's longstanding policy to oppose the death penalty in all circumstances, as a matter of principle. We have raised this issue of principle at the highest level with the Government of Pakistan, as well as specific death penalty cases, and we continue to urge Pakistan to ensure adherence to due process and to international obligations.

The Committee's understanding of the latest situation is correct. There has been a de facto moratorium on executions in Pakistan since December 2019. However, the Government of Pakistan scheduled the execution of a prisoner for 25 May 2021. We have monitored this case closely and have engaged with the Pakistani authorities as well as with like-minded stakeholders. A stay of execution has been issued in this case. We will continue to stress the importance of preserving the de facto moratorium.

The UK has supported research into reviewing death penalty cases through Pakistan's lower courts, in order to enhance understanding of how these can be better aligned with the Supreme Court. We have also reduced the risk of child offenders receiving the death penalty, by playing a pivotal role in supporting the Juvenile Justice Act 2018, through directly supporting the establishment of Pakistan's first juvenile courts, with attendant training for the judiciary and lawyers.

Pakistan remains a priority country for the UK's wider work on human rights. We regularly raise our concerns, both on the overall trajectory and on specific cases of violation of rights at a senior level with the Government of Pakistan, and I have personally made several representations to Minister for Human Rights, Dr. Shireen Mazari in this regard. I can assure you that we will continue to monitor these issues closely, and will continue to engage the Government of Pakistan to make our views clear.

*Yours sincerely,*

**LORD (TARIQ) AHMAD OF WIMBLEDON**  
Minister of State for South Asia and the Commonwealth  
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