

**Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif**  
**Prime Minister House, Pakistan Secretariat**  
**Constitution Avenue**  
**Islamabad, Pakistan**

**Brussels, 7 April 2015**

**Re: Murder of Mr Samiullah Khan Afridi, a lawyer**

Your Excellency,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE), which, through the national Bars and Law Societies of the Member States of the European Union and the European Economic Area, represents more than 1 million European lawyers. In addition to membership from EU bars, it also has observer representatives from a further thirteen European countries' bars.

The CCBE places great emphasis on respect for human rights and the rule of law. We are particularly concerned by the situation of human rights defenders in the world and we wish to express our profound shock over the death of Mr Samiullah Khan Afridi, a lawyer who was killed in Peshawar on 17 March 2015. Mr Afridi represented Dr Shakil Afridi, a physician who organised a fake vaccination campaign that reportedly helped a US intelligence agency track down Osama bin Laden. In May 2014, Mr Afridi stepped down from Dr Afridi's case citing threats to his life.

According to our information, Mr Afridi was shot and killed in an attack carried out by two unknown men. A Taliban faction, Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan Jamaatul Ahrar (TTP-JA) claimed responsibility for his death in an emailed statement to Pakistani news media that referred to Mr Afridi as "*the lawyer of Shakil Afridi, who was co-operating with the killers of Sheikh Osama bin Laden*", and further stated that "[t]he enemy should remember that we will kill each and every one of the killers of each of our brothers". The CCBE believes that the murder of Mr Afridi is related to the peaceful and legitimate exercise of his profession as a lawyer. In this context, the CCBE wishes to draw to your attention the following Principles of the United Nations Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers (1990):

Principle 16 states that:

*Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economics or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.*

Principle 17 says that:

*Where the security of lawyers is threatened as a result of discharging their functions, they shall be adequately safeguarded by the authorities.*


Furthermore, principle 18 states that:

*Lawyers shall not be identified with their clients or their clients' causes as a result of discharging their functions.*

In view of the above, the CCBE respectfully urges you to investigate the killing of Mr Samiullah Afridi, in order to identify all of those responsible and to bring them before a competent and impartial tribunal. In addition, the CCBE asks you to take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity of lawyers in Pakistan as well as their ability to perform their professional duties without fear of reprisal, hindrance, intimidation or harassment.

I look forward to hearing from your Excellency urgently.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. ŚLAZAK', written in a cursive style.

Maria ŚLAZAK  
President