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**UNITED NATIONS YOUTH AND STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRIA**

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**VIENNA INTERNATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS**  
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**Abstract**

**Human Rights Council (HRC)**

**"Civil and Political Rights in Pakistan"**

The United Nations Human Rights Council is an international body within the United Nations System. The Council is the successor to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. Its stated purpose is to address human rights violations, including gross and systematic violations, and make recommendations thereon. It also should promote an effective coordination of human rights within the United Nations System.

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan is ruled by General Pervez Musharraf's military-backed government - in office since a 1999 *coup d'état* - that declared a state of emergency on 3 November 2007, suspending the constitution. On 28 November Musharraf retired as army chief and the following day he took the oath of office as president under the suspended constitution for a five-year term. Though Musharraf suspended the state of emergency on 15 December the constitution was amended so that regulations, decreed since 3 November remain in force even after the constitution is restored.

Pakistan still has not signed important international conventions and agreements on the protection of human rights, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Convention against Torture. The Human Rights Council should address the violations of the Civil and Political Rights in Pakistan, particularly the violations concerning the Repression of Political Opponents, the Freedom of Expression and the Legal Discrimination.

Arbitrary detention, lack of fair trials, torture, enforced disappearances and mistreatment of terrorism suspects and political opponents remain crucial problems for the country and its development. Furthermore counterterrorism operations in Pakistan continue to be accompanied by serious violations of human rights that include harassment, intimidation and censorship of the media.

The Human Rights Council should pressurize the government of Pakistan to take the necessary steps and to not only ratify but also implement important and fundamental treaties. It should call on the government to release detained journalists, human rights activists and political workers and to stop exerting pressure and influence on the country's judiciary.