



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office



**Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon
Minister of State (Middle East,
North Africa, South Asia,
Commonwealth and the UN)**

**Prime Minister's Special
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Iain Stewart MP
House of Commons
London
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Our ref: MC2024/06138

13 March 2024

Dear Iain,

Thank you for your correspondence of 12 March, on behalf of a number of your constituents, about Pakistan's elections. I am replying as the Minister of State for South Asia, responsible for Human Rights.

The UK has a close and longstanding relationship with Pakistan, underpinned by strong links between our people. We have been consistent in our messaging that we support credible, inclusive and secure elections, in line with the law.

Following the general election in Pakistan on 8 February, the Foreign Secretary issued a statement which is available at [Pakistan elections 2024: Foreign Secretary's statement - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statements/2024-02-08-pakistan-elections-2024-foreign-secretarys-statement). In this statement, the Foreign Secretary recognised the serious concerns raised about the fairness and lack of inclusivity of the elections. He also conveyed regret that not all parties were formally permitted to contest the elections and that legal processes were used to prevent some political leaders from participation.


Prior to the election, we note the 30, 31 January and 3 February decisions by Pakistani courts handing down prison sentences to former Prime Minister Imran Khan and his associates. We understand that these convictions are the subject of ongoing appeals. We regularly raise human rights concerns with the Government of Pakistan. As the Foreign Secretary's statement notes, this includes the right to a fair trial, through adherence to due process and an independent and transparent judicial system. The UK does not interfere with individual legal cases, which are a matter for the Pakistan judicial system.

I would like to assure you that we engage regularly with the Government of Pakistan to advance key priorities and interests, including on media freedom, freedom of expression, and upholding democratic norms. We continue to monitor the current political and human rights situation in Pakistan closely.

The UK will work with Pakistan's next government across the range of our shared interests. This is an important time for Pakistan, the new government must prioritise delivery of crucial reforms for all its citizens.

We will continue to raise concerns about the fairness of the elections and the need to respect human rights and the rule of law.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

LORD (TARIQ) AHMAD OF WIMBLEDON

Minister of State

Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict