



WORLD FORUM OF FISHER PEOPLES (WFFP)

Forum mondial des populations de pêcheurs

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To: Honourable Prime Minister Mr. Mian Nawaz Sharif
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Subject: Call for the Pakistani authorities to make public the exact location of detention of Mr. Saeed Baloch, who was arrested by the Pakistani Rangers on 16 January.

Dear Honourable Prime Minister, Mr. Mian Nawaz Sharif

We call upon the Pakistani authorities to make public the exact location of detention of Mr. Baloch and for full respect of the principles of due process and all of Mr. Baloch's human rights as internationally recognized.

In the late afternoon of 16 January, Mr. Baloch informed his colleagues from the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) that he was arrested by the Rangers. For over a week, no one heard from Mr. Baloch and the Rangers spokesperson denied that Mr. Baloch was in their custody. On Tuesday 26 January, [Mr. Baloch was presented before the Sindh High Court](#), where the Rangers' legal team claimed to have 'credible information' about the Human Rights defender's involvement in extortion and other offences that came within the ambit of the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA), 1997. The court was told that Mr. Baloch was placed under three-month preventive detention under Section 11-EEEE of the ATA. Meanwhile, a Rangers spokesman said in a statement that Mr. Baloch was arrested on January 25 within the jurisdiction of the Kalri police station.

Mr. Baloch has fought for the protection of the natural environment and the Human Rights of fisher peoples since the 1980'ies. As part of his persistent efforts for social and environmental justice, he has exposed alleged cases of corruption and campaigned against the plan to construct two new nuclear power plants in fragile coastal areas close to Karachi.

As the General Secretary of the PFF, Mr. Baloch has also played a leading role in governance of small-scale fisheries and the protection of Human Rights of fisher peoples globally and in Pakistan. Under the leadership of Mr. Baloch and as a leading member of the World Forum of Fisher Peoples, the PFF has played a critical role in the development of United Nations legal instruments, including the International Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries and the Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and other people working in rural areas (currently negotiated by a working group established by the United Nations Human Rights Council).

The arbitrary arrest of Mr. Saeed is an acute and dangerous threat to the Human Rights of fisher peoples in Pakistan and internationally and to the sustenance of mother earth. Furthermore, it is in breach with Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Signed by Pakistan on Apr 2008 and ratified on 23 Jun 2010:

*- Right of everyone to liberty and security of person and protection against **arbitrary arrest or detention**. Everyone who is arrested shall be informed at the time of arrest of the reasons for his arrest and shall be promptly informed of any charges against him. Anyone arrested or detained on a criminal charge shall be brought promptly before a judge or other officer authorized by law to exercise judicial power and shall be entitled to trial within a reasonable time or to release.*

The Anti Terrorism Court and the Rangers must immediately facilitate a meeting with the family and legal defence. They should further guarantee compliance with the Supreme Court ruling for regular appearance of all detained persons in court at least every 10 days to ensure that custodians observe all rights of Mr. Baloch, specially against torture and against manufacture of false evidence.



Naseegh Jaffer,
General Secretary of the World Forum of Fisher Peoples

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