

**Address - Allocution**

**Bernard Amyot**

**President, Canadian Bar Association**

**Président, l'Association du Barreau canadien**

**March in Solidarity with the Defenders of the Rule of  
Law in Pakistan**

**Marche des avocats pour la primauté du droit au  
Pakistan**

**Check Against Delivery**

**Ottawa**

**Sunday, Dimanche Nov. 25 nov. 2007**

Good morning, my name is Bernard Amyot, president of the Canadian Bar Association. Thank you all for taking part in this important march today, in solidarity with those defending the Rule of Law in Pakistan.

A special thanks to the County of Carleton Law Association which willingly agreed to co-sponsor this event. CCLA Past President Tom Conway, will say a few words on behalf of President Richard Moore in a few moments.

First I'm pleased to report that the International Commission of Jurists-Canada praised our march in a statement issued by an Advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, Hina Jilani. Copies are posted on our website.

We're joined here by Canadian Bar leaders from every jurisdiction in Canada. Many others have written to voice their support.

I want to thank the Young Bar Association of Montreal for their words of encouragement. The South-Asian Bar Association also stands behind our march. It is represented here by Daljit Nirman, of Ottawa.

Let me also mention CBA Past President, Tom Heintzman and his wife Mary Jane who traveled from Toronto to join us in this March of solidarity.

À titre de président de l'Association du Barreau canadien, je tiens à vous remercier de votre participation à cette marche de solidarité en faveur du maintien de la primauté du droit au Pakistan.

Des responsables de barreaux de pratiquement chaque juridiction au Canada sont venus nous prêter main forte.

J'en profite également pour souligner l'appui de l'Association du Jeune Barreau de Montréal et la participation de l'Association du Barreau de l'Asie du Sud, représentée ici par Daljit Nirman, un avocat d'Ottawa.

Permettez-moi enfin de remercier l'Association du Barreau du Comté de Carleton pour le soutien qu'elle a apporté à cette initiative.

As Canadian lawyers, we are all deeply concerned by the troubling situation in Pakistan.

Earlier this month, General Pervez Musharraf suspended Pakistan's constitution and shut down its Supreme Court before it could issue a ruling on his recent re-election.

He then hand-picked a new bench which, last week, quickly dismissed legal challenges to his continued rule for another 5-year term.

In spite of the obvious dangers involved, Pakistan's lawyers displayed great courage by resisting the imposition of martial rule.

Sadly, we are by now all familiar with the television images of our colleagues being beaten and jailed for defending their belief in justice.

While most of the activists have since been freed, the Emergency Declaration remains in place. Pakistan's government deserves wide condemnation for these actions.

C'est avec une profonde consternation que nous avons suivi les évènements récents au Pakistan.

Le régime Moucharraf s'est attaqué brutalement aux avocats et militants politiques qui se sont opposés à l'état d'urgence et à la suspension de la Constitution, ainsi qu'au renvoi des juges de la Cour suprême.

Des milliers d'avocats ont été emprisonnés.

Pour l'Association du Barreau canadien ces agissements du régime Moucharraf constituent une attaque inacceptable contre l'indépendance de la magistrature et la primauté du droit. Cette violation flagrante des principes fondamentaux de la démocratie est condamnable à tous égards.

So today, in front of the Supreme Court of Canada – a symbol of the rule of law – we express our outrage at the treatment endured by our colleagues in Pakistan.

We wish to reaffirm our commitment to the fundamental principle of the independence of judges and lawyers, and of the rule of law in a free and fair society.

Without these key democratic ingredients, no state can be held accountable.

Here in Canada, we value the independence of the judiciary and of the legal profession. We hold these convictions without fear of recriminations, detention or torture.

Unfortunately, our colleagues in Pakistan are denied such guarantees. Thousands have risked their lives to defend the arbitrary use of state power.

It is our duty - not only to grant - but to *show* them our full support and admiration. That is why we are here today. As members of the legal profession, we admire their courage and their determination to uphold the rule of law.

Nous condamnons vigoureusement la répression exercée à l'encontre des avocats pakistanais qui, pour avoir tenté de défendre l'indépendance de leur appareil judiciaire, ont vu leur liberté d'expression bafouée.

Nous de l'Association du Barreau canadien tenons à exprimer notre admiration devant leur courage et à réaffirmer notre engagement à les soutenir dans leur lutte contre tout abus de pouvoir.

So today the Canadian Bar Association joins the international legal community in calling for:

- An end to emergency rule in Pakistan, and
- A return to the rule of law by reinstating the judiciary, releasing all arrested lawyers, and guaranteeing respect for human rights

Aujourd'hui l'Association du Barreau canadien lance un appel au gouvernement du Pakistan :

- pour qu'il mette fin à l'état d'urgence,
- qu'il rétablisse la magistrature,
- qu'il de libère les avocats détenus et
- qu'il garantisse le respect des droits humains.

L'ABC appuie avec fierté la position du gouvernement canadien et la suspension du Pakistan par le Commonwealth. La primauté du droit est l'une des pierres d'assise de la démocratie et de l'engagement international du Canada.

The CBA is proud to support our government's position and the suspension of Pakistan from the Commonwealth. The Rule of Law is a cornerstone of democracy and of Canada's international commitments.

Merci. Thank you for your show of solidarity.