



The  
CENTER for  
VICTIMS of  
TORTURE

## **The Center for Victims of Torture Condemns Pakistan's Expulsion of Afghan Refugees**

**ST. PAUL, Minn.** — The Center for Victims of Torture (CVT) today issued this statement in response to reports of expulsions of Afghan refugees by the Pakistani government.

“At the Center for Victims of Torture, we are deeply disturbed by the Government of Pakistan’s expulsion of Afghan refugees back to Afghanistan. Over the last four decades, the Afghan people have experienced multiple wars, conflicts, Taliban rule and instability – they have suffered from the trauma of violence and displacement time and time again. Pakistan too, has suffered from decades of war and instability; Pakistanis know well the trauma that results from being violently uprooted from your home.

“Therefore, it is outrageous that the Pakistani government is actively displacing those who sought refuge from conflict and persecution within its borders. It is shocking that Pakistan is perpetuating a cycle of trauma and violence to those who have called it home for decades. This will have a deep and long-lasting impact on those already vulnerable.

“By expelling Afghan refugees, including those born in Pakistan, Pakistan violates international law and the principle of *non-refoulement*, as it deliberately sends refugees to a place where there is substantial risk of their human rights being violated. For years, Pakistan has lauded itself as one of the largest refugee-hosting countries. Now, it has turned its back on refugees.

“At the Center for Victims of Torture, we extend rehabilitative care to survivors of torture and those who have experienced violent conflict. Our clients tell us of the long-term symptoms, including post-traumatic stress disorder and depression, they live with after escaping violence. We know that many people of Afghanistan suffer these same effects. In fact, in the wake of the disastrous situation in Afghanistan, we are opening new programs right now, dedicated to serving Afghans who have fled to Minnesota and Georgia.

“Many of the refugees in Pakistan are awaiting resettlement in third countries and are registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), yet are being detained and deported. This is unacceptable.

“Afghani refugees have the right to seek asylum; Pakistan has the responsibility to provide a refuge.” -Yumna Rizvi, CVT senior policy analyst

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*The Center for Victims of Torture is a nonprofit organization with offices in Ethiopia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Uganda, United States and additional project sites around the world.*

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