

URGENT ACTION

INVESTIGATE WHEREABOUTS OF MISSING AFGHANS

Journalist Sayed Qasim Hashemi and artist Hamed Ehsas, both Afghan nationals who fled Afghanistan immediately after the Taliban takeover, fearing threats to their lives due to the nature of their work, have been missing since 4 July in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan. Neither individual's family has been able to reach them since and the police authorities have refused to register cases regarding their abduction. The circumstances raise concerns that they may have been subjected to enforced disappearance or arbitrary detention. Pakistani authorities have an obligation to investigate their disappearance and inform the families about their whereabouts and fate.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Inspector General of Police

Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi

Police Lines Headquarters

Sector H-11, Islamabad

44000, Pakistan

Phone: 051-9259387

Email: jg@islamabadpolice.gov.pk

X: [@ICT_Police](#)

Dear Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi,

I am writing to express grave concern regarding the disappearance of two Afghan nationals Sayed Qasim Hashemi, a journalist, and Hamed Ehsas, an artist, missing in Islamabad since 4 July. According to their families, the two men left together from Section F-7 in Islamabad on the evening of 4 July and shortly thereafter became unreachable. Their phones were switched off, and the vehicle they had been using was later located in Islamabad's D-12 area. Despite repeated efforts by relatives to seek assistance from the police and the courts, their families have received no clear and verifiable information about their fate and whereabouts. The police have also refused to file a First Information Report.

Sayed Qasim Hashemi and Hamed Ehsas' families worry that their loved ones may have been forcibly disappeared by the state authorities or deported to Afghanistan, where they face considerable threats from the de-facto Taliban authorities due to their work as journalists and artists. Both individuals were working on awareness-related work regarding the Afghanistan Security Forces prior to the Taliban's return to power. Further, both individuals have health conditions. They fled Afghanistan immediately after the Taliban takeover in August 2021, fearing threats to their lives due to the nature of their work.

I urge you and the government of Pakistan to:

- ***Immediately take steps to disclose the fate and whereabouts of Sayed Qasim Hashemi and Hamed Ehsas;***
- ***Conduct a prompt, thorough, impartial, independent and transparent investigation into their disappearance, including examination of any possible involvement of state agents or individuals acting with state acquiescence. If so, all those suspected of criminal responsibility should be brought to justice and, if there is sufficient admissible evidence, prosecuted in fair trials.***
- ***Ensure that if they are in the custody of any state authority, they are promptly granted access to their families, legal counsel and any medical care they may require; and***
- ***In the absence of any criminal charge against them recognized under international law, release Sayed Qasim Hashemi and Hamed Ehsas immediately.***

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Sayed Qasim Hashemi and Hamed Ehsas came to Pakistan in 2021, after the de-facto Taliban authorities took over in Afghanistan. They filed their documents to register with the UNHCR soon after arrival. Due to Pakistan's increasing crackdown on refugees, the validity of all UNHCR-issued Proof of Registration cards has expired as of 30 June 2025, and the Pakistani authorities have refused to [renew](#) them, a move that has impacted nearly 1.4 million Afghan refugees and asylum seekers.

Afghan nationals in Pakistan are face extremely precarious situations and are especially vulnerable to deportation since the implementation of the 'Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan' in October 2023. Between September 2023 and August 2026, a total of 2.4 million Afghan nationals has been returned to Afghanistan despite the risk they face upon return and in violation of the principle of non-refoulement under international human rights law. In 2025, UNHCR noted that [110,000 Afghan refugees](#) inside Pakistan have high-risk profiles with increased international protection needs, and specific or cumulative vulnerabilities that could qualify them for resettlement. Since the deportations have started, Afghan nationals, refugees and asylum seekers inside Pakistan have faced harassment, arbitrary detention and evictions across Pakistan. Pakistan does not have any law recognizing refugees nor is it a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention, which has meant that refugees inside the country have no legal framework and are thus vulnerable to arbitrary harassment by the Pakistani authorities.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English, Urdu

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 10 March 2027

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Sayed Qasim Hashemi (he/him); Hamed Ehsas (he/him)