



For Immediate Release
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**STATEMENT OF DR. WILLIAM F. SCHULZ
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL USA
ON THE TREATMENT OF RAPE SURVIVOR MUKHTARAN BIBI
BY THE PAKISTANI GOVERNMENT**

Amnesty International USA is gravely disappointed by reports that gang-rape survivor Mukhtaran Bibi was pressured into withdrawing her visa application for a speaking tour in the United States. That the Pakistani government would bar Ms. Mukhtaran from leaving the country is a testament to the calculated measures it has taken to obscure a human rights record that flies in the face of international standards.

Ms. Mukhtaran, who late last week was in effect put under house arrest and then disappeared, only to show up a day later at a press conference and state her intent to forego her invitation to the United States, was victimized first by her attackers and again by her recent treatment at the hands of her own government. This same government refused to intervene in her case at the time of her rape until it was shamed into action by international pressure.

Despite lifting the travel ban against Ms. Mukhtaran, the government of Pakistan has yet to clarify its role in the cancellation of her trip to the United States. We call on the government of Pakistan to give a public account of what transpired in the time Ms. Mukhtaran was missing and to recommit to protecting women's rights. We urge the United States government to determine whether pressure was indeed exerted on Ms. Mukhtaran to withdraw her visa request.