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For Release: December 4, 2007  
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## MEDIA ADVISORY

### **ASIL TO HOST DISCUSSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND**

### **RULE OF LAW IN PAKISTAN**

WASHINGTON, DC –The American Society of International Law (ASIL) will host a lunch presentation by **Dr. Farooq Hassan**, Senior Advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and US Attorney at Law, entitled *Pakistan: The Rule of Law and Legal Profession in a State of Emergency*. This event will take place on International Human Rights Day, Monday, **December 10, 2007, 12:00-2:00 pm** (ET), at ASIL headquarters, **2223 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, DC** (Dupont Circle). Members of the public and press are invited to attend the event by registering at [www.asil.org/pakistan](http://www.asil.org/pakistan).

Suspension of the Pakistan Constitution, the effective sacking of the Supreme Court Chief Justice and high court judges, and the detention of members of the legal profession throughout Pakistan raise serious questions of international human rights law and standards for the rule of law. Similarly, the imposition of emergency rule has weakened judicial independence and fundamental rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including the right to a fair trial, equality before the law, and freedoms of expression, assembly, association, and movement.

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On December 10, Dr Hassan, who has served four Pakistani prime ministers as an advisor on law and foreign affairs and argued many cases before the Pakistan Supreme Court, will discuss whether or not free and fair elections can be conducted under a state of emergency and how the departure of many leading Pakistani judges has affected the judiciary's legitimacy in the eyes of society. His presentation will center on how these issues might affect the future of the legal profession in Pakistan and its role in supporting the rule of law. Following Hassan's remarks, Professor **Dinah L. Shelton**, George Washington University Law School, will provide commentary. ASIL Director of Programs, **Andrew Solomon**, will moderate the event, which is being held in commemoration of International Human Rights Day.

ASIL is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, educational membership organization. It was founded in 1906, chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1950, and has held Category II Consultative Status to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations since 1993. ASIL's mission is to foster the study of international law and to promote the establishment and maintenance of international relations on the basis of law and justice. The Society's 4,000 members (from nearly 100 countries) comprise attorneys, academics, corporate counsel, judges, representatives of governments and nongovernmental organizations, international civil servants, students, and others interested in international law. ASIL events, such as *Pakistan: The Rule of Law and Legal Profession in a State of Emergency*, generally deal with one of the Society's seven thematic focal areas: Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, International Institutions, International Law and Development, International Security, Science and Technology, Trade and Investment, and Transnational Litigation and Arbitration. For more information, visit [www.asil.org](http://www.asil.org).

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