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Chaudhry Anwar-ul-Haq
Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir
Prime Minister Secretariat
Muzaffarabad
Pakistan, 13100

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Dear Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar-ul-Haq,

**I am writing to express my concerns regarding the charges against Pakistani journalist and poet, Ahmad Farhad, and his previous enforced disappearance from his home in Islamabad on 15 May 2024 by four men in plain clothes**. Despite a First Information Report (FIR) regarding his disappearance being filed on orders of the Islamabad High Court, his whereabouts remained unknown until 29 May when he resurfaced in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, at a check post in Kohala, near Muzaffarabad. He was then taken into custody and a case was filed against him for «obstructing public servant in discharge of public functions», at Dhirkot Police Station. He has since also been implicated in another case dated 13 May 2024, in which he is not named, on charges of posting probative and hateful content on social media, especially Facebook, regarding the Kashmir Long March.

While I appreciate the government’s efforts to recover Ahmad, I remain deeply concerned about the trumped-up charges filed against him and the ongoing investigations under the Azad Kashmir Penal Code and Anti-Terrorism Act. If found guilty, he can spend up to 10 years in prison. In addition to the current cases and his recent enforced disappearance, Ahmad has long endured various forms of intimidation from state authorities and is now being targeted for his social media activities. As a journalist covering social movements and peaceful protests, and for advocating against enforced disappearances, he should not be subjected to criminal charges. Furthermore, no investigation into Ahmad’s enforced disappearance has been opened.

**Therefore, I urge your Government to:**

* **Drop all criminal proceedings against, and end the harassment and intimidation of, Ahmad Farhad for exercising his right to freedom of expression;**
* **Ensure that anyone suspected of criminal responsibility for their involvement in Ahmad’s enforced disappearance is investigated and tried before civilian courts through principles of fair trial without recourse to the death penalty.**

Yours sincerely,

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**Copie**

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