

URGENT ACTION

1.4 MILLION REFUGEES NEED REGISTRATION RENEWAL

Since the 'Illegal Foreigners' Repatriation Plan' was announced by Pakistan's government in October 2023, at least 1,080,312 Afghan refugees and asylum seekers have been forced to return to Afghanistan in violation of international law, namely the principle of non-refoulement. The plan, divided into three phases, seeks to deport non-registered refugees, Afghan Citizen Card holders and Proof of Registration (PoR) card holders respectively. The UN Refugee Agency-issued PoR cards to at least 1.4 million Afghans, set to expire on 30 June 2025. Pakistan must uphold the rights of refugees, immediately stop all deportations and renew the PoR cards before the deadline expires.

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

Minister of Interior

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Dear Honourable Minister,

I am writing to express my urgent concern regarding the imminent expiry of UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)-issued Proof of Registration (PoR) cards held by **at least 1.4 million Afghans in Pakistan**. I am also deeply concerned by the harassment, arbitrary detention and forced return of at least 1,080,312 Afghans, including refugees and asylum seekers since October 2023.

The PoR cards of at least 1.4 million Afghans in Pakistan are set to expire on 30 June 2025. The Pakistani authorities must renew the PoR cards, as they have done in the past, to ensure that 1.4 million are not exposed to harassment, arbitrary detentions and forced deportations by the authorities. If forced to return to Afghanistan, they risk serious human rights violations, including extrajudicial executions and torture, as well as crimes against humanity, such as gender persecution. In particular, at-risk groups such as journalists, human rights defenders, female protestors, artists, and former government officials would be at imminent risk of persecution and repression by the Taliban. While women and girls forced to return will be deprived of their education, work and participation in public life, many Afghans would also be facing separation from their families, loss of livelihood and homelessness.

In October 2023, the government announced the 'Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan', an opaque initiative aimed to arbitrarily and forcibly expel Afghan nationals from Pakistan. Since then, the authorities have cracked down on unregistered Afghan refugees, demolishing homes of refugees, confiscating their properties and setting up detention centres – with those held denied access to lawyers.

The forced deportations, along with the crackdown on Afghan refugees is in violation of Pakistan's international law obligations, notably the principle of non-refoulement.

I therefore urge you to urgently renew the validity of Proof of Registration cards and formally withdraw the 'Illegal Foreigners' Repatriation Plan', stopping all forced returns to Afghanistan. I further urge you to immediately stop the crackdown on Afghans in Pakistan.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In October 2023, the interim government [announced](#) the 'Illegal Foreigners' Repatriation Plan', a three-phased plan to deport Afghans from Pakistan. In the first phase, unregistered Afghan nationals were given a 30-day deadline to leave the country or face deportation. More than 468,000 Afghans returned to Afghanistan in the months of October, November and December 2023. The announcement was followed by a [wave](#) of harassment and arbitrary detention across the country. Since then, Afghan nationals continue to live in fear and anxiety.

The second phase of the Plan was initiated on 1 April 2025 when the government announced that it will deport approximately 800,000 Afghan Citizen Card (ACC) holders. These cards were issued by the Pakistan government between 2017 and 2019. The government also announced that it will [expel](#) all Afghan nationals from the cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi and urged Afghan nationals in Pakistan awaiting relocation to third-countries or with pending visa applications to leave the country by the end of April 2025. The authorities have warned of '[intense](#)' [action](#) now that the deadline has expired. A total of [1,088,133 Afghans](#) have returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan from September 2023 to 7 June 2025, according to the UN International Organization for Migration. The third and last phase of the Illegal Foreigners' Repatriation Plan would be the deportation of UNHCR-issued Proof of Registration (PoR) card holders, expected to be upon their expiry on 30 June 2025.

According to the UNHCR, more than 1.4 million Afghans have been issued PoR cards. The PoR cards were originally set to expire at the end of June 2024, however, the government announced a year-long [extension](#) setting the new expiry date to 30 June 2025. The status of PoR card holders will be unclear if the Pakistani authorities do not renew their validity.

Under the de facto Taliban authorities, Amnesty International has documented a litany of human rights violations such as extrajudicial executions, arbitrary arrests, torture, enforced disappearances of dissenting voices, journalists, human rights defenders, protesters, artists, and former government employees, among others. If forced to return, Afghan refugees and asylum seekers risk reprisals and other human rights violations from the Taliban de facto authorities. Since 1 April 2025 alone, 51,309 women and 64,010 girls have been forced to return to Afghanistan. Upon their return, they will be denied the right to education and right to work. The Taliban have imposed more than 70 draconian edicts intensifying restrictions on women and girls, attempting to erase them from public life.

In January 2025, the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) filed for arrest warrants against the Taliban Supreme Leader, Haibatullah Akhundzada, and the Taliban Chief Justice, Abdul Hakim Haqqani, for their responsibility for the crime against humanity of gender persecution in Afghanistan. In April 2025, UN experts, including the Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Afghanistan, Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, Working Group on discrimination against women and girls, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences, Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing, and Special Rapporteur on Afghanistan, called on Pakistan to stop the forcible removal of Afghans. The principle of non-refoulement applies to all countries, as a principle of international customary law. Pakistan is also a signatory of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention Against Torture 1984, which include the principle of non-refoulement.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English, Urdu

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 15 September 2025

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

NAME AND PRONOUN: At least 1.4 million Afghan refugees (All)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa33/7416/2023/en/>

ADDITIONAL TARGETS

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