

As the sentencing of Dr. Aafia Siddiqui draws closer at the Federal District Court in Manhattan, we, the undersigned, urge US Attorney General Eric Holder to exercise all prosecutorial authority vested in him to permit Dr. Aafia Siddiqui to be repatriated to her native Pakistan as a matter of urgency. Given all the facts and circumstances of this case, repatriation of Dr. Siddiqui to Pakistan would not only serve the interests of justice and the American people, but is also warranted on humanitarian grounds.

There are numerous credible reports that Dr. Siddiqui was abducted from Pakistan with her three young children in March 2003. Dr. Siddiqui claims that she was detained in a series of secret prisons for five years during which time she was abused, tortured and raped by her captors. Her youngest son, Suleman, remains missing to this day.

Prosecution witnesses claim that Dr. Siddiqui first came into US military custody after having been shot while being detained with her eldest son, Ahmed, at a local police station in Afghanistan in July 2008. Dr. Siddiqui suffered two near-fatal gunshot wounds in the incident, but no one else was injured. Prosecution witnesses say that Dr. Siddiqui picked up an unattended firearm and attempted to shoot at US personnel in Afghanistan, who shot back at her in self-defense. Despite the lack of any forensic evidence that Dr. Siddiqui ever touched, much less fired, a gun Dr. Siddiqui was convicted by a jury sitting in US federal court in New York in February 2010.

Regardless of whatever happened in the July 2008 incident for which Dr. Siddiqui was prosecuted, important questions remain unanswered in Dr Siddiqui's case. What little information has been made available to date paints a chilling portrait of Dr. Aafia as a victim – first, of domestic violence and related physical and emotional trauma, and later, of governmental abuses of power (or, at a minimum, indifference to her plight).

The interests of the US public are also best served by permitting Dr. Siddiqui's two young children, both of whom are US citizens, to be reunited with their mother. Both children are believed to have been kept in detention camps in Afghanistan prior to having finally located with assistance from regional authorities. Ahmed and Mariam, ages 14 and 12 respectively, now reside with their grandmother in Karachi.

In light of the unusual circumstances of this case, in which it appears that at a minimum, Dr. Siddiqui suffered severe physical and emotional trauma prior to the crimes which she has been charged with, we call upon US Attorney General Eric Holder to exercise all lawful authority vested with the US Department of Justice to allow Dr. Siddiqui to be repatriated to Pakistan on humanitarian grounds.

Yours

Maryam Hassan, Justice for Aafia Coalition  
Imran Khan, Tehreek e Insaaf  
Lord Nazir Ahmed



Caroline Lucas MEP, Green Party  
John McDonnell MP  
Sir Geoffrey Bindman  
Bruce Kent, Vice-President, Pax Christi, UK  
Professor Gargi Bhattacharyya, Sociology and Public Policy, School of Languages and Social Sciences, Aston University  
Professor Bill Bowring, Barrister, Professor of Law, Birkbeck College  
Gareth Peirce, Birnberg Peirce and Partners  
Louise Christian, Christian Khan Solicitors  
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Lindsey German, Stop the War Coalition  
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Omar Deghayes, former Guantanamo detainee and Legal Director, Guantanamo Justice Centre  
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