

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**U.S., PAKISTANI GOVERNMENTS COOPERATE TO RETURN 103
PAKISTANI NATIONALS TO ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), in cooperation with the Government of Pakistan, this week successfully repatriated 103 Pakistani nationals who were illegally present in the United States. The Pakistanis, who had exhausted their legal avenues of appeal, were flown by chartered aircraft from the United States to Islamabad yesterday.

Michael J. Garcia, Assistant Secretary (designee) for ICE, hailed the cooperative effort. “The Pakistani government provided tremendous support in helping us complete this important mission,” he said. “We look forward to continuing to work with governments around the world as we use this agency’s unique enforcement tools, including immigration laws, to promote heightened security here in the homeland.”

The government of Pakistan worked with U.S. officials to authorize travel documents and coordinate logistics for the flight. A Pakistani government official accompanied the group to assist in the smooth return.

Yesterday’s repatriations represent the fourth in a series of collaborations between Pakistan and the U.S. within the last year, leading to the successful repatriation of about 500 Pakistani nationals.

Pakistani government officials emphasized the importance of intergovernmental cooperation in the effort. “Almost all of these individuals wanted to return home as quickly as possible and be reunited with their families,” said Imran Ali, the Second Secretary for Political and Consular Affairs at the Embassy of Pakistan. “Our priority was to ensure their swift return with dignity and honor.”

This week’s flight was the latest in a series of recent removal missions the U.S. government has completed with the support of foreign governments. Other recent repatriation operations have included flights to Cambodia, El Salvador, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Nigeria, and the Philippines.

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