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**[Five Muslims Convicted in Pakistan MAS Freedom Response](#)**

Filed under: [From the Desk of Imam Mahdi Bray](#) — Imam Mahdi Bray @ 2:05 pm

The sentencing of five American youth who traveled to Pakistan is indeed a tragic affair from all perspectives. And without a doubt, this is a devastating ordeal for the parents and family members of these young men. Their sentencing and the concerns of the political and judiciary process in Pakistan certainly raises some questions. But a bigger question is what are we doing to ensure that other youth and their families will not have to endure what has just taken place in Pakistan. Check out the piece below. Imam Mahdi Bray

Quote of the Day: “It is better to light a candle than curse the darkness.”

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MAS Freedom Press Statement**

**Five Muslims Convicted in Pakistan**

*MAS Freedom Response*

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (MASF) Jun. 24th, 2010** – Five Muslim-American youth from Virginia, who traveled to Pakistan in 2009 and allegedly met with representatives of banned organizations, were convicted in a Pakistani court on June 23rd of conspiracy against the state, and funding a terrorist organization.

The youth-Ahmed Abdullah Minall, Aman Hassan Yemer, Waqur Khan, Umer Farooq, and Ramy Zamzam- all come from the northern Virginia area. They receive sentences of 10 years at hard labor in a Pakistani prison. None of them have previous histories of criminal activity or had expressed intentions, while in America, or any desire to support armed anti-American resistance activities while in Pakistan.

Prior to their sentencing, the young men claimed that they were victims of torture while in Pakistani custody and that the evidence presented against them in court by the prosecutors in the case had been fabricated.

But while these convictions were met with great concern and sadness from the Muslim-American community, they raise another serious issue: impressionable Muslim young men being swayed by the allure of militant anti-American “Jihadis”, and the consequence, for the young people, for their families, and most of all, for the entire Muslim community, are nothing short of disastrous.

There is evidence that these convictions will be appealed to a higher court in Pakistan, and many Muslims in the United States are hopeful that these young people will eventually be found innocent of these extremely serious charges. And, in fact, the U.S. wars in both Iraq and Afghanistan are opposed by a sizable portion of the Muslim population in this nation.

But many Muslim leaders also know that young men who struggle with feelings of alienation from American foreign policy, or who oppose the U.S. government collaboration with the Israeli occupation of Palestine, might be tempted into the kind of naive adventurism that would lead them to leave America and seek common cause with extremist groups.

MAS Freedom does support the right of appeal for the young men convicted in Pakistan, and we hope that all the relevant facts in their case will be brought to light. We are well aware that in the current political climate of “anti-terrorism” zeal, innocent people have been, and continue to be, unjustly accused of conspiracy against the U.S. government, or in this case, an American ally.

Now, at this critical moment in Muslim American history, we need to stand with our youth, and help them resist the temptation to take any actions that will only likely result in their imprisonment, or their death. Muslims do have legitimate issues that must be heard. But we should advocate for the political and social empowerment of our community, and especially of our youth, in ways that are both consistent with the morality of our faith and our adherence to the laws of the land.

All of us should pray and hope for the best for the five young Muslim men convicted in Pakistan. But we must also work seriously to implement the MAS vision of our “Straight Path” program that challenges injustice effectively, and without the possibility of the terrible consequences of unnecessary death or imprisonment that all too often lie at the end of those fateful, and fruitless, collaborations with the “enemies” of America.

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