

Australian legal profession condemns horrific violence against lawyers in Pakistan

The Law Council of Australia has condemned the terrorist attacks in Quetta, Pakistan, which claimed the lives of dozens of lawyers who had rushed there to protest and mourn the earlier fatal shooting of Bilal Anwar Kasi, President of the Balochistan Bar Association.

At least 70 people were killed outside the Civil Hospital, most of them lawyers. Over 100 more were injured.

Law Council of Australia President, Stuart Clark AM, said the killings were a particularly horrific example of the threat faced by lawyers around the globe.

“The scope of the horror in Quetta defies easy comprehension. On behalf of the Law Council of Australia, I want to offer our sincere and heartfelt condolences to those killed and those injured, as well as their families,” Mr Clark said.

“The judiciary is a fundamental pillar of any democracy and the targeting of lawyers and judges, whether by a government or those seeking power through force of arms, is calculated to intimidate or remove those who stand for the rule of law and against corruption.

“We urge international assistance for the Pakistani Government so that it can effectively investigate this violence and ensure that any persons who are charged are dealt with according to law and receive a fair trial.

“It is indeed ironic that it will be Pakistani lawyers who will demand that any persons charged with offences in relation to this tragedy receive a fair trial.

“In far too many places in the world, it requires extraordinary bravery to practice law.

“The Law Council of Australia salutes the bravery and dedication to the rule of law shown by the Pakistani legal profession,” Mr Clark said.

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