

URGENT ACTION

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER REUNITED WITH FAMILY

Human rights defender Wahid Baloch has been released more than four months after suspected enforced disappearance by state security forces in Karachi. No information about his situation or whereabouts had been communicated to his family throughout the ordeal.

Human rights defender and ethnic Baloch political activist **Wahid Baloch** was reunited with his family on 5 December 2016, more than four months after he was taken by masked men in plain clothes from a highway toll plaza on the outskirts of Karachi, Pakistan on the afternoon of 26 July 2016.

His family has said that he was dropped in Malir, 30km east of Karachi, on Monday morning 5 December and he was then able to take a taxi to his home in Lyari. Wahid Baloch chose not to speak about his abduction during a news broadcast, however thanked rights groups for campaigning on his behalf.

As far as Amnesty International is aware, Pakistan authorities have failed to carry out a prompt and thorough investigation, despite state security forces having a long history of subjecting Baloch activists to enforced disappearances, as acknowledged by both the Chief Minister of Balochistan and the Pakistan Supreme Court in 2013.

Activists calling for greater autonomy for the Baloch population, or demanding justice for state violations are seen by the Pakistani authorities as being “anti-state” and are particularly vulnerable to these violations. Wahid Baloch’s abduction follows a pattern of enforced disappearances of individuals belonging to the ethnic Baloch community from the province of Balochistan and in and around the city of Karachi, in Sindh province.

No further action is requested from the UA network on this case. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.

This is the first update of UA 181/16. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa33/4580/2016/en/>

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