

MESSAGE FROM ASIF ALI ZARDARI
PRESIDENT ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN
ON THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF ELECTION

Islamabad Feb 17, 2009: Following is the message of President Asif Ali Zardari on the eve of the first anniversary of elections on February 18.

"I wish to compliment the people of Pakistan particularly all the political parties and workers who waged a heroic struggle and offered huge sacrifices to force the dictatorship hold elections.

"On this occasion our thoughts go to those hundreds of martyrs of democracy led by Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto who laid down their lives for the cause. Their cause was to make the usurper relinquish power and give it back to the people. They are our heroes and heroines who will continue to shine on the canvas of time and inspire generations even in a distant age and clime. But for their sacrifices we may not have witnessed democracy as is witnessed today.

"On this day let us reiterate our commitment to preserve, protect and enhance democracy. Let us vow not to let anyone usurp the rights of the people; not to let dictatorship strike again.

"This requires rededication to the principles of parliamentary democracy Constitutionalism and rule of law. We all must joins hand to make the Parliament – the embodiment of the will of the people- truly strong and supreme.

"A great threat to democracy comes from militancy and militants who want to impose their political and ideological agenda through bullet instead of ballot. We must stand united and not let them succeed.

"Tolerance, reconciliation and dialogue have illumined our path on the road to democracy after the Feb 18 elections last year. We will continue to be guided by these principles in our long haul in dealing with all those who will respect the Constitution and rule of law and who seek to bring change through ballot instead of bullet."