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Chairman of Pakistan Senate to speak at Dole Institute Nov. 3; quake relief a topic

LAWRENCE -- The chairman of the Pakistan Senate will address his country's emerging status in world affairs and update ongoing relief efforts following devastating earthquakes in the region in a lecture next month at the University of Kansas' Dole Institute of Politics.

Mohammedmian Soomro will speak on "Emerging Opportunities in Pakistan" at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 3, at the Dole Institute. The event is free and open to the public.

Soomro will also be participating in a question and answer session at the KU Edwards Campus' Regnier Hall Auditorium, 12600 Quivira Road in Overland Park. That event will begin at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 2. For more information, call the KU Edwards Campus at (913) 897-8400 or visit <http://edwardscampus.ku.edu>.

"Chairman Soomro's appearance is very timely. He will be able to tell us about relief efforts and what we can do to help. His main focus will be Pakistan's new world role. The alliance between the U.S. and Pakistan is a critical one in many respects, including the war on terror," said Dole Institute Director Bill Lacy. "Chairman Soomro is uniquely qualified to speak to this relationship."

A magnitude 7.6 quake, followed by numerous aftershocks as strong as 5.6 in Pakistan, has killed about 40,000 people in the region and left millions homeless.

As the leader of the upper house of Pakistan's parliament, Soomro ranks as the second highest leader in the country, acting as the president in his absence. Soomro was a banker and financial management expert who previously was president of the National Bank of Pakistan before serving as governor of the Sindh province from 2000 to 2002. He was elected unopposed as presiding officer of the Senate in 2003, an office that plays a pivotal role in legislative initiatives and promoting cooperation between the different levels of government.

Usually about 10 Pakistani students enroll to study at KU each year.

Soomro is the third international figure who has appeared at the Dole Institute in 2005, following former Ecuadorian President Rodrigo Borjas and former Polish President Lech Walesa.

Other noted speakers coming to the institute this fall include potential Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Joseph Biden, who will speak at 1:30 p.m. Oct. 28 at the institute. For reservations, call the institute, (785) 864-4900, or e-mail doleinstitute@ku.edu.

The Dole Institute, established at KU in 1997 to honor the former Kansas senator and presidential nominee, is designed to foster new thinking on major policy issues and encourage student participation and citizen involvement in public service. For more information, call (785) 864-4900 or visit www.doleinstitute.org.