Thank you for joining us for today’s Spotlight. I’m Rebekah Schipper. And I’m Joshua Leo. Spotlight uses a special English method of Broadcasting. It is easier for people to understand no matter where in the world they live. In 1997 Jehan Mina became pregnant. She was 15 years old. Jehan was raped. Two members of her family forced her to have sex with them. No one saw Jehan’s uncle and cousin rape her. And since no one saw it happen, authorities did not charge the men with a crime. Instead, Jehan was charged with a crime. Jehan was not married. But it was clear that she had had sex, because she was pregnant. Sex without marriage was against the law. A judge put Jehan in jail for three years. She also received ten lashes, or strikes with a rope. She was jailed and beaten because her uncle and cousin raped her. There are many other stories like this in Pakistan, where Jehan lives. There, rape victims have been charged with adultery. To charge someone with a crime, there must be evidence. Or there must be a witness, a person who saw the crime happen. But the Pakistani evidence law states that in court, the evidence of one man is equal to the evidence of two women. Two women have to report a crime for it to be evidence. But only one man needs to report for it to be evidence. Today’s spotlight is on two women who defend women in court. They are sisters who fight for human rights. Even as children, Hina Jilani and her sister Asma Jangir knew about people being treated unfairly. Their father and mother greatly influenced them. Their father and mother were involved in human rights. Their father spoke against violence in Pakistani government. Their mother was a teacher in a mixed sex-school. This was very uncommon in Pakistan at that time. But the family did not have an easy life. Authorities put the girl’s father in prison for speaking against the government. Their mother worked very hard to support her family. Education was important to Hina and Asma’s parents. So their parents made sure to send them to a good school. Hina finished as one of the best students in her school. But Asma was not as good of a student. Instead, Asma put her energy into her political beliefs. She felt strongly about human rights. In 1969, Asma led a protest against Pakistan’s dictator. She risked her life to raise a flag on a political official’s gate. A year later she fought for her father to be released from prison. She brought the case to court. She claimed that military rule of the government was against the law. She won the court case. This encouraged her to get a law degree. Asma studied privately and gained her law degree. But Asma was not the only lawyer in the family. Her sister Hina had also gained her law degree four years earlier. In 1981 the two sisters formed their own law agency. It was the first all-female law agency in Pakistan’s history. But the sisters did not stop there. They also formed a group called the Women’s Action Forum. The Women’s Action Forum is a pressure group. This means that they pressure and influence the laws of their country to encourage human rights. The group especially fights the evidence law. The people in the group encourage the equality of men and women. The sisters gained respect in their country. Both became officials in the High Court. They continued to fight for the weakest people in their country. The sisters fought for victims of “honour killings.” You may have heard a spotlight program about honour killings. Honour killings happen when a man accuses a woman of having sex outside of marriage. A male family member will kill the woman to preserve the honour of the family. Sometimes, men falsely accuse a woman. Often the family member will still kill her. Official courts are not involved in honour killings. Honour killings happen in many countries. The sisters created a legal aid office to give women legal help in these kinds of situations. They also created a shelter for women who have been physically harmed. One woman staying at the shelter has much respect for the sisters. “I wish there were more people like them...A lot of women in Pakistan would not have to go through what they are going through today. I remember my friend said, ‘You can go to any shelter-home but you will not find a place like this.’” The sisters’ fight for human rights often brings them difficult times. Some corrupt government officials do not want to change. Some people do not want women to have equal rights. Sometimes, these people threaten the sisters with violence. One time, someone shot a person Hina was working for. Hina was right in front of her. Another time, a man with a gun entered Hina’s home to frighten her. He also threatened members of her family. Yet another time, police caught a man carrying a knife outside of Asma’s house. He wanted to kill her. But Hina and Asma continue their fight. Hina says that her father was a good example for her. She says that he fought for what he believed , even through difficulties. She says: “He felt it was important to speak about rights of minorities. So I think I learned from him that…you will have a little bit of trouble, but you always defeat that trouble” Today, the sisters both hold special positions in world politics as well. The United Nations have appointed them to report about human rights violations. The sisters help the United Nations protect human rights, and the people who fight for human rights. They report unfair treatment of people throughout the world. Hina recently spoke to a group of human rights defenders. In her speech she said: “I am very honoured to be amongst you who are human rights defenders. You have travelled a long way in your own lives to protect these values. Values which are very different from the values, of other people.” In her speech, Hina praised the work of the human rights defenders. She encouraged them to keep fighting for human rights. This is what both sisters continue to do today. They work to protect and encourage people all around the world. The want to see all people treated fairly. They want the wprld to protect people who fight for human rights. They work very hard to make the world a better place for all people. The writer and producer of this program was Joshua Leo. Computer users can find more Spotlight programs and their scripts on our website at http://www.radio.english.net. This program is called “Fighting for Human Rights.” If you have a comment or question, you can e-mail us at radio @ english . net. We hope you can join us again for the next Spotlight program. Goodbye!