

**Question for written answer E-002082/2018
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: EU trade policy with Pakistan in the light of serious human rights violations and crimes against Christians

Pakistan ranks fifth on the Open Doors 2018 World Watch List of the 50 countries where it is most challenging to be a Christian. Besides the well-known case of Asia Bibi, only last month 17-year-old Patras Masih was accused of blasphemy and is now imprisoned. Extremist groups are threatening to burn down 700 Christian homes if the boy does not confess, which has led to a massive exodus of Christians from the suburbs of Lahore. Another 17-year-old, Sharoon Masih, was beaten to death in his classroom because he had drunk from the same cup of water as his Muslim classmates. In another case, a Pakistani police officer kidnapped a 14-year-old girl, Sumbal Arif, and forcibly converted her to Islam. This case revealed a chain of human trafficking in Pakistan involving the kidnapping of Christian girls, their forced conversion to Islam and them being sold to Muslim men. Despite such violations of fundamental human rights, EU bodies have brought Pakistan into the fold of the Generalised Scheme of Preferences Plus. This has allowed Pakistan to benefit from preferential EU trade rules, despite human rights abuses and crimes against Christians.

What is the Commission doing to prevent these crimes, and have such crimes led to changes in EU trade policy with Pakistan?