

**Question for written answer E-003857/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR)

Subject: Violation of human rights of Christians in Pakistan

The plight of the Christian community in Pakistan is currently deplorable, with Christians being subjected to frequent violations of their human rights. In August 2012, Rimshah Masih, a Pakistani Christian girl, was falsely accused of burning the Qur'an and arrested on charges of blasphemy. Asia Bibi, another Christian woman, was brutally beaten by her co-workers and then arrested by the police for declaring that Jesus Christ is not dead but the Prophet Mohammed is. Currently, she faces charges of blasphemy, and is serving a four-year prison term while further facing a death sentence. In June 2013, in the Pattoki area of Kasur district, three Christian women were beaten and then paraded naked by armed men in the service of a powerful local landlord supported by the ruling PML(N) party. On 25 June, a Christian lawyer was threatened with dire consequences if he offered legal assistance to the three women¹.

Parliament's resolution on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion and belief² states that 'according to the standards of international law, all states have the duty to provide effective protection to all their citizens and all other persons under their respective jurisdictions' and that 'promoting the right to freedom of religion or belief or preventing it from being violated has to be a priority in the EU's external policies'³.

1. Is the Commission aware of the human rights abuses against Christians in Pakistan?
2. What measures will the EU take to ensure that Pakistan does not violate the human rights of minorities within its territory?

¹ Sources: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/01/pakistan-girl-accused-blasphemy-canada>; <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-11930849>; <http://www.humanrights.asia/news/urgent-appeals/AHRC-UAC-085-2013>

² P7_TA(2013)0279.

³ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0279+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>