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Answer given by Mr Hogan
on behalf of the European Commission
(25.3.2020)

The Special Incentive Arrangement for Sustainable Development and Good Governance (GSP+) removes duties on around two-thirds of tariff lines for vulnerable low and lower-middle income countries that implement 27 international conventions related to human rights, labour rights, protection of the environment and good governance.

The 2018-2019 Report on the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) was submitted to the European Parliament and the Council on 10 February 2020¹. It includes a Staff Working Document on Pakistan², elaborating on the country's effective implementation of the 27 international conventions. The report highlights that Pakistan is making some progress in certain areas, for instance on the protection of women's and children's rights; the elimination of honour killings; the protection of transgender persons; cooperation with the United Nations, and good governance.

At the same time, the report points to areas of concern, for instance related to the death penalty, enforced disappearances, space for civil society, and labour rights. With regard to labour rights, the report identifies weaknesses regarding the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining and their applicability in Export Processing Zones and Special Economic Zones.

Pakistan has increased its efforts to implement the environmental conventions. However, a Hazardous Waste Management Policy and the rules for trade control of wild fauna and flora need to be strengthened.

The Commission and the European External Action Service will continue discussing these and other issues with Pakistan as part of the continuous monitoring of the country's commitments under the GSP+.

¹ Brussels, 10.2.2020 JOIN(2020) 3 final

² Brussels, 10.2.2020 SWD(2020) 22 final (The EU Special Incentive Arrangement for Sustainable Development and Good Governance ('GSP+') assessment of Pakistan covering the period 2018 – 2019)