

**Question for written answer E-000224/2023/rev.1  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Generalised Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP+) and new blasphemy law in Pakistan

On 17 January 2023, the National Assembly of Pakistan passed the Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill. Its specific purpose is to increase the punishment of imprisonment from 3 to 10 years for insulting figures of Islam, specifically the family members of the prophet Muhammad. As a beneficiary of the EU's GSP+ programme, Pakistan is bound by a number of international conventions protecting the freedom of expression and the freedom of religion or belief, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

1. Does the Commission agree that the new legislation is another example of Pakistan's reluctance to comply with its obligations under the GSP+ arrangement and with international law in general?
2. Can the Commission confirm that this new development will be a significant factor of evaluation in the ongoing biennial review of Pakistan as a GSP+ beneficiary?
3. Does the Commission agree that this development is yet another reason to consider the temporary withdrawal of Pakistan's GSP+ status, as requested by Parliament in its resolution of 29 April 2021<sup>1</sup>?

Submitted: 25.1.2023

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<sup>1</sup> European Parliament resolution of 29 April 2021 on the blasphemy laws in Pakistan, in particular the case of Shagufta Kausar and Shafqat Emmanuel (OJ C 506, 15.12.2021, p. 77).