

**Question for written answer E-002702/2023**

**to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy**

Rule 138

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**Subject:** Protecting the human rights of Christians and all people in Pakistan from abusive blasphemy laws

Parliament's resolution of 29 April 2021 on the blasphemy laws in Pakistan<sup>1</sup> outlines a culture of harassment, violence and even murder stemming from Pakistan's controversial 1986 blasphemy laws. The resolution highlights an alarming increase in blasphemy accusations, which often target Christians.

False blasphemy accusations hinder Christians from speaking freely or engaging in religious activities. For instance, in August 2023, a mob burned 26 churches in Jaranwala, Pakistan, following blasphemy claims.

Parliament has stressed the incompatibility of Pakistan's blasphemy laws with international human rights obligations and with Pakistan's own constitution, and has called on Pakistan to abolish these laws while urging the Commission and the European External Action Service to review Pakistan's eligibility for GSP+ status.

Pakistan's GSP+ status expires in December 2023. The EU must now consider whether the country has done enough on fulfilling its commitments to guarantee human rights, including religious freedom, to qualify for another GSP+ designation.

We therefore ask:

1. How does the Commission view Pakistan's trajectory on basic freedoms, including religious freedom and the protection of minorities?
2. What are the Commission's 'red lines' regarding Pakistan's inclusion in a new GSP+ scheme?

Submitted: 19.9.2023

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0157\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0157_EN.html).