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The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan accredited to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and with reference to its letter number ALPAK5/2018 dated 23 July 2018 has the honour to share that the Government of Pakistan attaches highest importance to Human Rights Agenda and is fully committed to the fulfilment of its international obligations.

Pakistan has embraced the Human Rights mechanisms with seriousness that they deserve. A clear illustration of Pakistan's intent is our robust participation in three treaty body reviews and our third UPR last year all within the space of six months. All included Ministerial-level participation throughout underscoring political ownership of these mechanisms by our democratic society. Such is Pakistan's positive peer review that Pakistan was elected as Asia-Pacific nominee for the Human Rights Council Working Group on Situations.

Being a parliamentary democracy, with free media, independent judiciary, and vibrant civil society, Pakistan is working diligently for the promotion, protection and respect of all Human Rights both domestically and internationally.

The Constitution, legal and administrative framework of Pakistan as a whole fully protects the rights of all its citizens including minorities. Many Articles of the Constitution such as Articles 20, 21, 22, 26, 27 and 28 ensure that minorities including Ahmadis are equal citizens of Pakistan and safeguard them against any form of discrimination.

The Blasphemy Law in Pakistan is non-discriminatory in nature as it is based on respect for all religions. It deals with offences against all religions and applies to Muslims and non-Muslims alike. It aims at

ensuring public order and harmony in society, by seeking to prevent inter religious discord and incitement to violence, inter alia through hate speech. Necessary checks and guarantees are available in our constitutional and legal framework to prevent the misuse of Blasphemy Law.

Pakistan believes in constructive engagement with the OHCHR for the promotion and protection of all Human Rights and considers that taking the views of the Government of the country concerned are a sine qua non for addressing any concern. In this regard, the Mission would like to refer to the 'Press Release' to be issued by the OHCHR on Wednesday 25 July 2018 (as indicated in its above referred letter) and state that such an action goes against the spirit of positive interaction since Pakistan Government's views have not been taken on board. In order to give a balanced, holistic and informed picture, the OHCHR is urged not to issue any 'Press Release' before the deadline of 60 days has been met and the response of Government of Pakistan has been properly considered.

The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.




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