



No. Sp/Proc/1/2025

The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and has the honour to refer to communication AL PAK 2/2024 dated 22 July 2024.

The Permanent Mission has the further honour to attach the response of the Government of Pakistan to the communication under reference.

The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) the assurances of its highest consideration.

Encl: as above



Geneva, 26 January 2026

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
Palais Des Nations
1211 Geneva 10

Government response to AL PAK 2/2024 dated 22 July 2024

With reference to communication AL PAK 2/2024 dated 22 July 2024, the Government submits that as a democratic state governed by the rule of law, the rights of all citizens, including religious minorities, are safeguarded through a robust constitutional and legal framework.

The Constitution of Pakistan unequivocally guarantees fundamental rights to every citizen. Article 4 guarantees the right of individuals to be dealt with in accordance with law. Article 9 secures the right to life and liberty. Article 14 ensures the inviolability of human dignity. Article 15 protects the freedom of movement. Article 16 guarantees the freedom of assembly. Article 17 ensures the freedom of association. Article 18 protects the right to profess, practice, and propagate one's religion, subject to law, public order, and morality. Article 19 guarantees the freedom of speech. Article 20 provides for the right to establish religious institutions. Article 25 establishes the right to equality before the law and equal protection of the law. Article 26 prohibits discrimination in access to public places. Article 27 safeguards against discrimination in service. Article 36 specifically obligates the State to safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of minorities. This comprehensive constitutional edifice forms the bedrock for the protection of all citizens.

Furthermore, Pakistan has enacted specific legislations to protect religious minorities and their places of worship. Also, the Pakistan Penal Code contains provisions (Sections 295-298) that criminalize actions intended to outrage religious feelings, defile places of worship, and insult religious beliefs. These laws are designed to protect all religions, and their application is meticulously overseen by an independent judiciary to prevent misuse. All actions by law enforcement agencies are required to be strictly in conformity with the law and are subject to judicial review. The Government of Pakistan treats all allegations of criminal activity with utmost seriousness and effective redressal mechanisms remain available.

The incidents referenced in the communication are, where formally reported, under active investigation by the relevant law enforcement and judicial authorities. It is imperative to allow these domestic legal processes to reach their logical conclusion without external prejudice.

The Government categorically rejects any allegation of state-sanctioned discrimination or violence against any community. Every allegation is investigated on its own merits, and any individual found responsible for unlawful acts, regardless of their affiliation or the affiliation of the victims, is prosecuted under the law.

Concerning the deaths of Gulham Sarwar, Rahat Ahmad Bajwa, and Tahir Iqbal, First Information Reports (FIRs) were registered immediately. Investigations are ongoing with the objective of identifying and prosecuting the perpetrators. The *mens rea*, for any crime is a key element of any investigation, and all angles, including potential sectarian or religious dimensions, are examined by the investigating officers under the supervision of the courts. The Government is committed to ensure that investigations are undertaken with the highest level of professionalism, integrity and fairness, in line with the requirements of due process and fair trial.

The detention of individuals under the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) Act, 1960, is a preventive measure, not a punitive one. It is invoked by the executive magistracy based on intelligence reports and material indicating a tangible threat to public peace and order. Such orders are subject to statutory timelines and judicial review. Most of the individuals are released at the end of the detention period and in view of the law-and-order situation. The system's built-in checks and balances remain effective, and all actions are taken to preserve public order, a legitimate aim under domestic law and consistent with Article 18(3) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which provides for limitations by law necessary to protect public safety and order.

It is highlighted that FIRs have been registered in cases of vandalism against places of worship and cemeteries mentioned in the communication and law enforcement agencies have taken action in several instances, and arrests have been made.

The Government condemns all acts of vandalism and is taking measures to enhance the security of worship places of all communities. The protection of religious sites is a priority for the state.

The preparation of electoral rolls is the constitutional mandate of the independent Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). The constitutional and legal position regarding the Ahmadiis in Pakistan is clear. Inclusion of individuals from the Ahmadiyya community in the separate voter list is not discriminatory but a consequence of the constitutional and legal regime in place. The Government ensures the safety and security of all voters' data and takes note of concerns regarding its potential misuse. However, any violations are addressed under relevant laws and there is no tolerance for any form of intimidation or harassment.

Pakistan's legal framework, including the Pakistan Penal Code and the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act, 2016, specifically criminalizes hate speech, incitement to violence, and cyber harassment. Authorities actively monitor and take legal action against individuals and entities involved in such activities, regardless of their target. The recent resolution passed by the National Assembly underscores the national consensus and commitment to protecting the lives and properties of all citizens, including minorities.

Beyond constitutional guarantees, the Government has instituted administrative measures to promote inter-faith harmony and protect minorities. This includes dedicated security arrangements for the protection of religious sites, observance of minorities' religious festivals, reserved quotas in government employment and educational institutions, and the establishment of a National Commission for Minorities. The Government remains engaged in continuous dialogue with representatives of all minority communities to address their concerns.

As a state party to the ICCPR, Pakistan discharges its obligations in good faith, within the framework of its constitutional provisions and legal framework. The Government of Pakistan is fully committed to the principles of equality, non-discrimination, and freedom of religion or belief consistent with its obligations under the ICCPR.

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