



HIGH REPRESENTATIVE  
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## **JOINT STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT**

**The EU Special Incentive Arrangement for Sustainable Development and Good Governance (GSP+) assessment of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan covering the period 2020-2022**

*Accompanying the document*

**Joint Report to the European Parliament and the Council**

**on the Generalised Scheme of Preferences covering the period 2020-2022**

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## 1. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

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During the monitoring cycle 2020-2022 the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (Pakistan) experienced unprecedented economic, political, and environmental challenges: the global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the energy and food crisis induced by the unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression of Russia against Ukraine as well as the unprecedented floods hit the economy and the Pakistani population hard. Despite the political turmoil with a change of government on federal level and strong tensions between government and opposition at federal and provincial level, Pakistan has undertaken important legislative steps in areas linked to its sustainable development in line with GSP+. It will be crucial for Pakistan to continue legislative reforms and to implement legislation so that they lead to tangible improvements for all Pakistanis.

Pakistan is the largest exporter to the EU under the GSP+ trade scheme and the EU is Pakistan's most important export destination. However, Pakistan relies significantly on textile and apparel for its exports. Export diversification would help Pakistan reduce its trade imbalances and would also increase its resilience to external economic pressures and shocks. The Government of Pakistan is clear on its commitment to maintain its GSP+ eligibility and during the monitoring period it has engaged openly with the EU at all levels. Political will needs to be coupled with more determined action for implementing reforms, in particular to better protect human and labour rights.

### 1.1. Priorities and Monitoring

As defined in the 2020 GSP monitoring report, priorities for the current monitoring cycle in the human rights area included adopting and implementing laws against torture and against enforced disappearances, a law to protect journalists, as well as reducing the scope of the death penalty in line with international standards. Furthermore, to create a conducive environment for civil society organisations, priorities included facilitating the (re)registration of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and simplifying the rules for registration of domestic NGOs.

In the area of labour rights, priorities included extending the application of labour legislation to Export Processing Zones (EPZ) and Special Economic Zones (SEZ), adopting and implementing a comprehensive child labour law and completing child labour surveys in all provinces, as well as strengthening the labour inspection system to enforce the existing labour legislation in all workplaces.

In terms of environmental protection, priorities included formulating a Hazardous Waste Management Policy and the rules for trade control of wild fauna and flora and implementing the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under climate action.

An EU monitoring mission visited Pakistan between 22 June and 1 July 2022. Besides the need to adopt new legislation, the monitoring mission underlined the need to better implement existing legislation across all policy areas. The findings of the mission informed this report.

## 1.2. Human Rights

Since 2020, Pakistan has adopted important laws in the field of human rights, namely regarding preventing and punishing torture, the protection of journalists, gender-based violence, preventing domestic violence, and, at provincial level, promoting women's rights. The 2022 law against torture constitutes a significant step in the implementation of the Convention Against Torture, and the supervisory role given by the law to the National Commission for Human Rights in investigations is a positive achievement. Further substantial efforts are needed for its implementation and the adoption of the relevant implementation rules. Landmark judgements on juvenile and mentally ill defendants and legislative reforms have also limited the scope of application of the death penalty. These are important steps to start addressing long term concerns in the effective implementation of human rights conventions. Other legislative initiatives, including a law on enforced disappearances and a federal law on domestic violence, would, if adopted, constitute important steps towards the implementation of international human rights conventions in Pakistan.

While legislative reforms are significant, important concerns remain, notably on enforced disappearances, on allegations of torture as well as on restrictions of freedom of expression, and media freedom. While first steps to reduce the scope of the death penalty have been taken, further efforts are needed to align with international standards, namely by introducing a comprehensive revision of the mercy petition procedure. Freedom of religion or belief and rights of persons belonging to minorities continue to be regularly violated, despite some efforts regarding interfaith dialogue. In this context, the Government must take determined action and clear positions against the discrimination of minorities, religious sects and vulnerable persons, the misuse of blasphemy laws, and the risk of false accusations, mob violence and even mob lynching.

Restrictions to the civil society space through administrative hurdles, and other pressures on NGOs continue, even if the revised NGO policy of November 2022 foresees accelerated procedures. Despite obstacles, Pakistan's civil society is vibrant. Pakistan's international commitments, incentivised by the GSP+, provide a space for civil society organisations and human rights defenders to address crucial issues and conduct advocacy.

The National Action Plan for Human Rights established in 2016 continues to be valid but requires further efforts to be fully implemented. With support by the EU, in January 2021 the Federal Ministry of Human Rights established a Human Rights Information Resource Portal as central repository on Pakistan's domestic and on the international human rights framework <sup>(1)</sup>.

In 2021, the Government adopted a National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, aimed at ensuring observance of Pakistan's duty to protect against human rights abuses by business entities, and creating an environment conducive to fostering corporate respect for human rights.

Courts and independent commissions are crucial for the the implementation of international standards in Pakistan. The chair and members of the National Commission on Human Rights (NCHR) were appointed in November 2021 after a long vacancy. Despite awaiting the allocation of necessary financial and human resources, the Commission plays a central role in the implementation of the human rights conventions.

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<sup>(1)</sup> <https://portal.mohr.gov.pk> As of October 2023, there has been no update on the portal since February 2022.

All links provided in this Staff Working Document were up to date as of 20 October 2023.

In February 2020, the Government also constituted the National Commission on the Rights of the Child. The chair and members of the National Commission on the Status of Women were also appointed. Following instructions by the Islamabad High Court, two special Human Rights Courts for Islamabad Capital Territory were instituted in November 2022. Foreseen in all provinces in the NCHR 2012 Act, they are to provide speedy trial of offences arising from violation of human rights. The creation of a National Commission for Minority Rights that would meet the requirements of the Paris principles and would include all minority groups, in line with a 2014 Supreme Court judgment in this regard, is still pending.

### 1.3. Labour Rights

Pakistan adopted new labour laws <sup>(2)</sup> in several provinces to align its legislation with international standards. Labour laws have been extended to EPZ, including the right to strike, and the Government of Pakistan confirmed that they are fully applicable to SEZ.

However, ILO Conventions are often still not effectively implemented and enforced due to limited capacity of labour inspectorates. The low unionisation rate remains a major concern as it limits workers' ability to improve their working conditions, including by collective bargaining, and trade unions face practical hurdles when trying to register and operate. Child labour and forced labour persist at high levels. Discrimination of women in the labour market, namely limited access to job opportunities and lower wages for equivalent work, continues to be widespread. Despite job quotas in the public sector, discrimination of minorities continues and lowly paid hazardous work for example in sanitation is primarily conducted by minorities. Insufficient occupational safety measures result in a high number of work accidents.

### 1.4. Environment and Climate

Pakistan has faced environmental disasters caused by climate change yet again in 2022, with extreme heat and severe flooding at unprecedented levels. In 2021 the Government of Pakistan submitted an updated ambitious NDC under the Paris Agreement aiming at an overall 50% reduction in projected emissions by 2030. It has taken steps in the protection of wildlife as guided by the CITES Secretariat and in 2023, the protected areas are to be increased from 12% to 15% of the country's territory. It has adopted a National Hazardous Waste Policy, for which implementation steps are in the process of elaboration <sup>(3)</sup>.

### 1.5. Good Governance

Corruption (political and economic) continues to be perceived as pervasive, and questions are raised on the independence of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB). Anti-corruption rhetoric and legal cases are heavily politicised.

Following positive reports, Pakistan has achieved the deletion from the "grey list" of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) <sup>(4)</sup> in a consensual decision by the FATF members in October 2022.

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<sup>(2)</sup> New laws include among others: right to strike; old age benefits; protection of minimum wages and the rights to organise and collective bargaining agents (CBA).

<sup>(3)</sup> A departmental framework to strengthen Environmental Protection Agencies in the provinces is being formulated in the light of this policy.

<sup>(4)</sup> <https://www.fatf-gafi.org/countries/s-t/turkiye/documents/increased-monitoring-october-2022.html#pakistan>

Pakistani authorities have made significant efforts in combating the trafficking of narcotics, but given Pakistan's location as a transit country, as well as its domestic consumption, it continues to remain a point of concern. Although efforts are being made to move from harsh punishment to health-based approaches to tackle drug use, these can be enhanced.

## **1.6. Status of Ratification and Reporting**

Pakistan has maintained ratification of relevant international conventions required by the GSP Regulation and has improved its reporting compliance due to enhanced awareness and capacity to engage in the Treaty Body Reporting exercise. The submission of overdue reports namely on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) was completed on 16 June 2022. Pakistan has followed up its reporting obligations for Convention against Torture (CAT) and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in June 2022 and October 2021 respectively, and has fulfilled its outstanding follow up reporting obligations for the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Reports are also partially due for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

Implementation of most of the Treaty Bodies' recommendations remains slow and several of them have adopted written follow up procedures as part of the review and engagement process.

The federal and provincial Treaty Implementation Cells (TICs) established in 2015 by the Government of Pakistan constitute a dedicated institutional framework to oversee and report on GSP+ implementation across the country. The provinces of Punjab and Sindh have established permanent structures with dedicated resources, while other TICs continue to lack capacity.

In a positive recent development, on 18 April 2023 the Government of Pakistan launched a National Compliance Centre which will work with business to improve the understanding of international compliance requirements and to promote a culture of equitable growth and a discrimination free work place.

Invitations were extended to the following UN Human Rights Council (HRC) Special Procedure Mandate Holders: the Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt, the Special Rapporteur (SR) on the right to education, the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, and the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food. However, dates are not yet determined, and no SR visits took place in the monitoring period.

The facilitation by Pakistan of a local presence of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) would be beneficial. Nevertheless, capacity building activities by non-resident OHCHR staff continue to benefit the advancement of human rights.

## **2. LONG-TERM VIEW: PAKISTAN SINCE JOINING GSP+ IN 2014**

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Pakistan is an important actor in a region characterised by high instability, geo-strategic tensions, and absence of regional integration. Since its independence from colonial rule in 1947, Pakistan's political power alternated between civilian governments and military

dictatorships. Despite continuous civilian rule since 2008, the military has played an outsize role in politics and the economy. Since 2014, Pakistan has been governed on the federal level by three different coalitions with one transition through general elections and one in 2022 through a no-confidence vote.

Despite a certain political volatility, economic growth in Pakistan was solid until 2018: according to the World Bank, GDP increased at an average annual rate of 5.1% from 2013 to 2018, clearly above population growth. Poverty also decreased from 29.5% in 2013 to 21.9% in 2018, when measured against the national poverty line. Economic growth slowed to 2.5% in 2019, contracted in 2020 by 1.3% as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, but rebounded strongly in 2021 and in 2022, increasing by 6.5% and 6.2%, respectively. Poverty also increased in 2020 because of COVID-19 but temporarily recovered. The overall GDP growth is likely to remain subdued because of the 2022 floods coupled with the financial crunch and the effects of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine on commodity prices. Likewise, inflation is likely to increase further in the coming months due to expected supply shocks and food imports. Important structural weaknesses affect economic performance, including low productivity growth, a large fiscal deficit and a large and increasing current account deficit, which had led to depreciation pressures, in turn fostering inflation.

After Pakistan became a GSP+ beneficiary in 2014, all three successive federal government administrations have expressed strong commitment to the GSP+ and its requirements. Pakistan has maintained ratification of the GSP relevant conventions and has taken steps towards their implementation. Institutions such as treaty implementation cells (TICs) and a National Commission for Human Rights are in place and functioning, although they would benefit from greater resources. Important legislative steps in implementation of Pakistan's international commitments have been taken, such as a law to protect transgender rights or a law against torture. Legislative steps have also been taken to protect women at work and a child labour survey is ongoing, although delayed. However, some additional legislative steps such as a law on enforced disappearances and on domestic violence at federal level are outstanding. The scope of the death penalty has been limited to an extent as a result of legislative and judicial intervention, and no executions have taken place since 2019. However, further steps are needed to ensure compliance with international requirements in this area. Moreover, continuous vigilance is required in order not to lose the gains achieved, such as the *de-facto* stop to executions.

On the other hand, these steps have been taken in the context of a country and a society where human and labour rights violations have remained pervasive throughout the period. Problems of environmental degradation have also continued, with recurrent droughts and flooding culminating in the disastrous 2022 floods. Corruption has remained a widespread problem in Pakistan. However, the delisting of Pakistan in October 2022 from the FATF list of jurisdictions under increased monitoring ("grey list") might enhance investors' confidence in the country's economy and financial system. Pakistan's authorities have continued to register the transit of narcotics through its territory despite law enforcement efforts. Therefore, while the period from 2014 to 2023 has seen positive steps taken, further efforts lie ahead to improve the implementation of the country's international commitments.



### 3. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

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After a no-confidence vote ousted Prime Minister Imran Khan, who had taken office during the previous monitoring period, a broad coalition government under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif formed the federal Government in April 2022. Since then, the political scene in Pakistan has seen increasing polarisation and controversy in relation to former Prime Minister Imran Khan. The political stand-off culminated in May 2023 with the detention of Imran Khan and members of his party, as well as street protests with violence against security forces and their installations. In the aftermath, many protesters were arrested and taken for trial including at military and anti-terrorism courts. Internet and social media were temporarily shut down. In early August 2023, former Prime Minister Imran Khan was arrested again and convicted, disqualifying him from contesting the next general elections. In August 2023, the National Assembly was dissolved a few days before the end of its term. Since then, a caretaker government is in place with a limited mandate until general elections.

The political turmoil and constitutional challenges in 2022 and 2023 caused disruption and absorbed considerable energy of all political actors. At the same time, an economic crisis, high inflation and serious shortage of foreign reserves continue to affect the country. The unprecedented floods in 2022 affected tens of millions of Pakistanis and will require substantial efforts over the medium to long-term for reconstruction and rehabilitation while impacting existing structural discrimination and socioeconomic disparities. In July 2023, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved a US\$3 billion Stand-By Arrangement for Pakistan.

#### **EU–Pakistan Development Cooperation**

The EU-Pakistan 2021-2027 Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (MIP) was adopted in December 2021. A Team Europe Initiative concentrates on green growth and building back better will galvanise EU Member States support and help deliver the Global Gateway in Pakistan.

The indicative financial allocation for the initial period of the MIP (2021-2024) is € 265 million to support three priority areas: i) Green Inclusive Growth; ii) Human Capital; and iii) Governance, including the Rule of Law and Human Rights. The first set of actions under the Annual Action Programme (AAP) 2022 concerns energy, rural development and vocational education and training, and will also contribute to the recovery efforts following the flood emergency of 2022. The AAP 2023 addresses a resilient post-floods recovery and reconstruction in the rural and livestock sectors. It also tackles governance, the promotion of human rights, women's participation and leadership in political processes, and support to civil society.

### 4. EU–PAKISTAN TRADE AND GSP+

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The EU is Pakistan's second most important trading partner, accounting for 14.3% of Pakistan's total trade in 2022 and absorbing 29.8% of Pakistan's total exports. In 2022 Pakistan's exports to the EU were 58.9% higher than in 2019, while imports from the EU witnessed an increase by 9.0% over the same period.

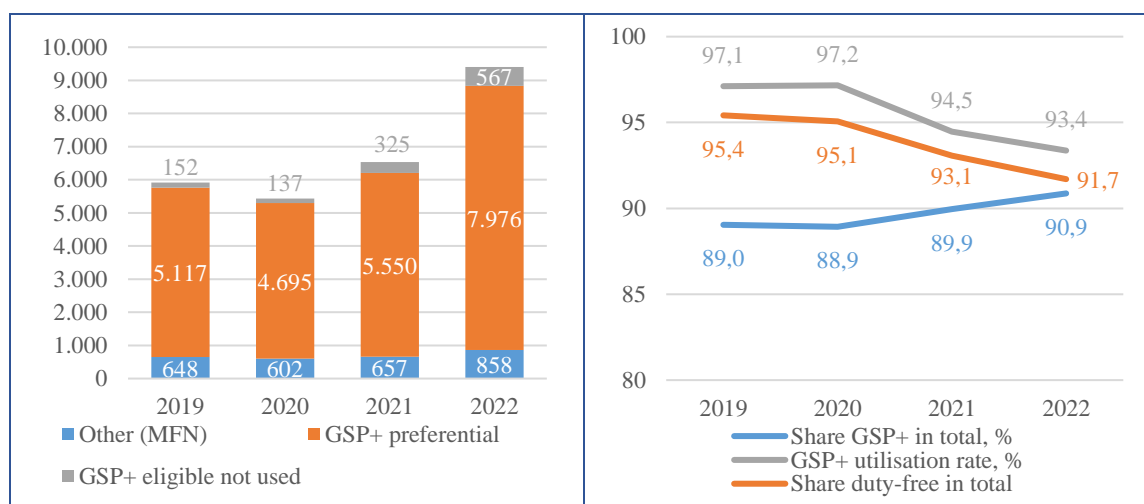
Figures 1-4 illustrate Pakistan’s utilisation of the GSP+ in the context of the EU's overall imports from Pakistan <sup>(5)</sup>.

Between 2019 and 2022, Pakistan noted very high rates of utilisation of GSP+ preferences (Figure 1 and 2). In 2022, exports of goods worth almost €8 billion used GSP+ preferences (Figure 1 and 2) with textile products benefitting most (Figure 3) and incurring the biggest tariff reductions (Figure 4). Pakistan should optimise, however, the use of GSP+ by diversifying its export base and including value added products into its export basket, which at present is too concentrated on textiles.

Figure 1: EU imports from Pakistan and GSP+ utilisation rate, 2019-2022

	2019	2020	2021	2022	Trend %
<b>Total imports, € million</b>	5,917.4	5,434.1	6,531.4	9,400.7	58.87
<b>GSP+ eligible, € million</b>	5,268.9	4,832.5	5,874.9	8,542.4	62.13
<b>GSP+ used, € million</b>	5,116.8	4,695.3	5,550.0	7,975.6	55.87
<b>Share GSP+ in total, %</b>	89.0	88.9	89.9	90.9	
<b>GSP+ utilisation rate, %</b>	97.1	97.2	94.5	93.4	

Figure 2: EU imports from Pakistan by trade regime (€ million) and utilisation rates (%), 2019-2022



<sup>(5)</sup> Source for all statistics: Eurostat data as of September 2023. GSP statistics only cover goods imported into the EU market, i.e., goods released for free circulation in the EU. The GSP statistics do not cover other EU-imports, like goods imported for the customs inward processing procedure or re-imports after the customs outward processing procedure. Trade flows registered as “confidential” do not appear in the GSP+ usage figures and regime 1 normal trade; but do appear in total trade figures (regime 4). [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/en/ext\\_go\\_agg\\_esms.htm#conf1537195068659](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/en/ext_go_agg_esms.htm#conf1537195068659)



Figure 3: Top Pakistan product groups benefitting from GSP+ tariff preferences, 2022, € million

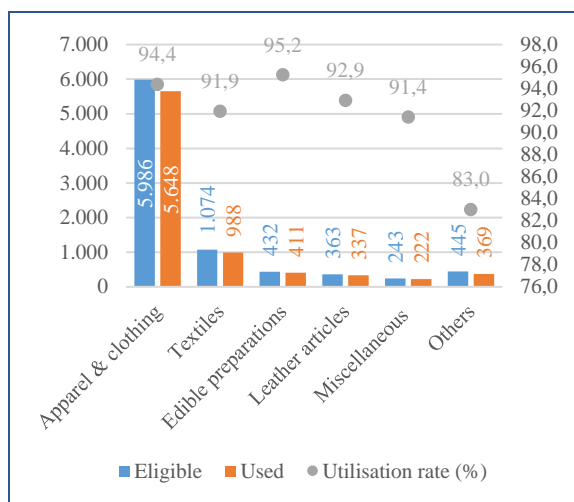
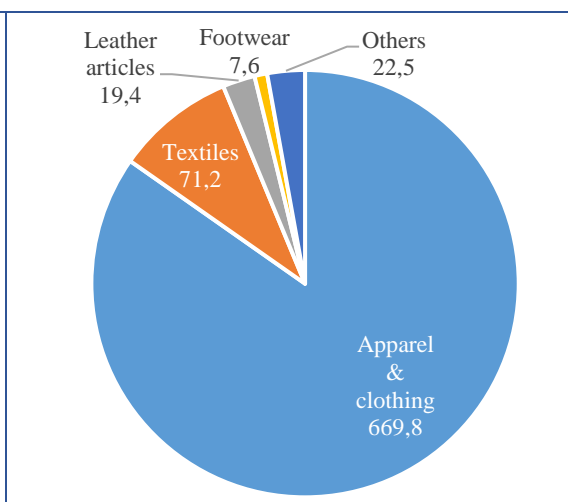


Figure 4: GSP+ tariff reduction gains per product group, 2022, € million



## 5. COMPLIANCE WITH GSP+ OBLIGATIONS

### 5.1. UN Human Rights Conventions (Conventions 1-7)

#### 5.1.1. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)

The Constitution and laws of Pakistan do not provide a comprehensive definition of minorities that would cover all the grounds of discrimination included in the CERD. Instead, it uses a narrow definition of minorities as non-Muslim religious groups, with minority rights being granted accordingly. Individuals and communities who identify as Muslims are not covered by such provisions <sup>(6)</sup>.

As mentioned in the previous monitoring report, discussions about an Interfaith Harmony Policy on federal and provincial level have been ongoing since 2015/2016. Punjab province presented a draft policy in 2021. The independence of the National Commission for Minority Rights created by the Government in 2020, as well as a Bill introduced in 2023 were criticised, including for not representing all minorities and for not meeting the Supreme Court 2014 requirements.

Despite lacking a comprehensive policy to counter hate speech domestically, Pakistan has made efforts, in the last years, to position itself internationally as leading on activities to counter hate speech, namely anti-Muslim hatred. The National Action Plan to Counter Terrorism of 2014 calls for action against literature promoting hatred, extremism, sectarianism and intolerance, as well as against religious persecution. Its impact in this regard remains however limited due to its primary focus on terrorism, as well as the lack of civilian ownership. Relevant legislation such as the the Pakistan Electronic Crimes Act 2016 (PECA), widely criticised for being used to clamp down on dissent, includes provisions against material that “advances or is likely to advance inter-faith, sectarian or racial hatred”, but closely links this to cyber-terrorism instead of addressing it as an issue in its own right. The “Removal and Blocking of Unlawful Online Content (Procedure, Oversight and Safeguards) Rules 2021” do not refer to hate speech as grounds for

<sup>(6)</sup> To be noted that in Pakistan, religious affiliation in some cases overlaps with ethnicity, language or origin.

restriction of freedom of speech and removal of online content (even though a template for complaints refers to PECA).

The Government introduced a ‘Single National Curriculum’ in 2020 to harmonise the school programme across public, private, and religious educational institutions. Nonetheless, critics point to the injection of Islamic religious reference in teaching material on non-religious subjects, in violation of paragraph 22 of the Constitution<sup>(7)</sup>. The curriculum has since been renamed ‘National Curriculum of Pakistan’.

Although minority job quotas exist in the public sector, those quotas are often not met, and if so, often only with lower category positions in lowly paid and hazardous jobs.

Despite the Pakistan Penal Code prohibiting forced marriages, there are concerns about these provisions in many cases not being applied entirely or at all<sup>(8)</sup>. Pakistan has not adopted further legislation specifically on forced conversions and marriage despite two initiatives during the monitoring period, namely the Protection of the Rights of Religious Minorities Bill (2020) and the Prohibition of Forced Conversion Bill (2021). Forced conversions are often closely linked to underage marriage and socio-economic dynamics and marginalisation of people belonging to minorities. Statistics for 2021 based on news reports indicate 78 cases of forced or questionable conversion from religious minorities to Islam with at least 76% involving minors.

Pakistan has rejected calls for a revision of the harsh law on blasphemy. In August 2023, the Senate tried to further extend the blasphemy law, but it was rejected by the President of Pakistan. Blasphemy allegations continue to be misused, including for ulterior motives. Mob violence is happening regularly and observed in several provinces affecting individuals, property, places of worship, and cemeteries. A few cases of mob lynching have also been reported, not all of them targeting blasphemy suspects. The Government should protect life and property of all citizens and strengthen measures to prevent hate speech and mob violence. Convictions for blasphemy in lower courts are often based on weak evidence and procedures and can result in death sentences<sup>(9)</sup>. Administrative safeguards to protect the defendants and to reduce the pressure on lower courts, which were mentioned in the previous monitoring report, are not applied systematically, and do not constitute an effective deterrent against and protection from the misuse of the law. No prosecution of false accusations of blasphemy, nor any rehabilitation of falsely accused defendants has been reported. As a result, blasphemy laws and their abuse continue to infringe on the freedom of religion and belief as well as the freedom of expression, particularly for minorities. In 2020 and 2021 the Government reported a total of 681 cases registered for offences against religion under four sections of the Penal Code<sup>(10)</sup>. While in absolute numbers, the majority accused of blasphemy are Muslim, non-Muslim religious minorities as well as Shia and Ahmadis were disproportionately affected.

Contrary to their self-identification, the Constitution defines Ahmadis as non-Muslims. On this basis, discriminatory laws and administrative provisions effectively prevent them from exercising their freedom of religion and belief. In the reporting period, several cases of desecration of Ahmadi mosques and cemeteries, sometimes with active support by local

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<sup>(7)</sup> 22(1) No person attending any educational institution shall be required to receive religious instruction, [...] if such instruction, ceremony or worship relates to a religion other than his own.

<sup>(8)</sup> See also special procedures communication AI PAK 6/2022 of 26 October 2022.

<sup>(9)</sup> A couple sentenced to death for blasphemy in 2014 was acquitted in 2021 and was able to travel to a safe place. The European Parliament had expressed concern about their cases in a Resolution of 29 April 2021 [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)

<sup>(10)</sup> Sections 295, 295A, 295C and 298A.

law enforcement, took place, as well as targeted attacks against and killings of Ahmadi individuals, without the perpetrators being prosecuted.

### 5.1.2. *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)*

In 2021, two landmark judgments <sup>(11)</sup> of the Supreme Court on juvenile and mentally ill defendants aligned Pakistan's legal practice with the provisions of the ICCPR with regards to the application of the capital punishment in these cases. In 2022 and 2023, Pakistan adopted legislation to reduce the scope of the death penalty by removing capital punishment for offences of railway sabotage <sup>(12)</sup>, and for narcotics offences <sup>(13)</sup>. The Cabinet Committee for Disposal of Legislative Cases (CCLC) has recommended three more crimes that should no longer lead to the death penalty <sup>(14)</sup>. The further review of Pakistani penal rules is necessary to ensure implementation of the notion of “most serious crimes” of Article 6 of the ICCPR.

After decreasing steadily since 2016, there have not been any executions since December 2019. However, the death penalty is still pronounced by lower (trial) courts (in 728 cases in 2021 and 554 cases in 2022). The vast majority of cases is revised on appeal, indicating a high level of scrutiny by higher courts as well as a weakness of procedures on lower court level. Given the lengthy trials and appeal processes, a high number of people remain on death row under dire conditions for years, even if they might be acquitted eventually. Independent sources report that the death row population fell significantly from 7,164 in 2012 to 3,226 in 2022. Lengthy judicial proceedings hinder the speedy resolution of criminal cases, with sources reporting that 71.5% of the inmate population composed of prisoners await trial.

A revised system of mercy petitions, simplifying and streamlining the process, which would increase transparency, reliability, and introduce time limits for decisions, has not yet been adopted. Since the lifting of the moratorium on the death penalty in 2014, no mercy has been granted.

An important step to address long-standing concerns regarding media freedom was the adoption of the Protection of Journalists and Media Professionals Act 2021 at federal level <sup>(15)</sup>. Concerns have been raised regarding Article 6 of the Act, which uses ambiguous terminology regarding disinformation, hate speech and incitement to violence and “hostility” and could be used to suspend the journalists’ protection. In 2022, the new government announced their decision to revise the Act as well as to disband the Pakistan Media Development Authority, which since its establishment through ordinance in May 2021 was widely criticised by journalists for its unchecked powers to control and silence media and limit freedom of expression.

Despite the legislative progress, the media community reports pressure and harassment limiting journalists’ ability to report. Pakistan continues to rank very low in international comparative rankings on press freedom, 150<sup>th</sup> out of 180 <sup>(16)</sup>. Women journalists are particularly targeted. On several occasions, government regulatory agencies blocked cable

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<sup>(11)</sup> The Supreme Court ruling in the case *Safia Bano v Home department* regarding mentally ill defendants and the Lahore High Court judgment relating to Muhammad Iqbal regarding minors.

<sup>(12)</sup> Railway (Amendment) Act 2022.

<sup>(13)</sup> Control of Narcotics Substances (Amendment) Act, 2023.

<sup>(14)</sup> Assault or use of criminal force to woman and stripping her of her clothes; Kidnapping or abducting for extorting property, valuable security etc., Punishment for harbouring hijacker etc.

<sup>(15)</sup> Protection of Journalists and Media Professionals Act 2021.

<sup>(16)</sup> <https://rsf.org/en/index?year=2022> (Comparison with previous years is not possible due to a change in methodology).

operators and television channels that aired critical or contentious content. The Pakistan Telecommunications Authority (PTA) indicated on 9 May 2023 that it had received an order for a blanket mobile broadband suspension, affecting the country's 125 million mobile broadband users. Several journalists suffered violent attacks and disappeared during the monitoring period. Online trolls target those expressing criticism of the civilian leadership or the military. Journalists report that self-censorship is becoming a survival strategy for many.

Besides the restrictions on media freedom, political activists, human rights defenders, and even elected representatives continue to see their freedom of expression limited through administrative, legal, and other measures. Vague concepts and the lack of adequate safeguards in relevant laws, in particular the PECA of 2016, allow for stifling of critical and opposition voices.

Students' rights of association and expression remain constraint by the ban on students' unions, which has been in force since 1993. As a positive step, in 2022 the Sindh province passed the Sindh Students Union Restoration Act allowing for the formation of student unions to promote and strengthen relations between students and educational institutions, as well as to facilitate the organisation of cultural, intellectual, and other extracurricular activities.

Enforced disappearances continue and so does the impunity for the perpetrators. The Commission on Forced Disappearances indicated that it had received 1,875 new cases and that it closed 1,814 cases in 2020-2021. However, the Commission has been criticised, including by the Islamabad High Court in June 2022, for not fulfilling its duties and not prosecuting anyone responsible for enforced disappearances. A Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill 2021, which aims to amend the Pakistani Penal Code to include enforced disappearances, was discussed by both Chambers of the Parliament but has not been adopted yet. In May 2022, a task force on forced disappearances led by the Minister of Law and Justice was constituted.

In the aftermath of the 9 May 2023 protests, civilians are being tried at military and anti-terrorism courts<sup>(17)</sup>. This implies a very wide interpretation of the notion of "terrorism" and gives rise to concerns about compliance with Article 14 ICCPR, guaranteeing the right to a trial by a competent, independent, and impartial tribunal. According to the UN Human Rights Committee, the "trial of civilians in military or special courts may raise serious problems as far as the equitable, impartial and independent administration of justice is concerned," and that "trials of civilians by military or special courts should be exceptional, i.e. limited to cases where the State party can show that resorting to such trials is necessary and justified by objective and serious reasons, and where ... regular civilian courts are unable to undertake the trials."<sup>(18)</sup>

According to the data collected in 2019-2020, Pakistan was the fourth non-EU country of origin of victims of trafficking in human beings identified in the EU. Victims were mostly male adults trafficked for labour exploitation. In 2021, Pakistan was ranked 5th non-EU country of origin of victims of trafficking identified in the EU.

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<sup>(17)</sup> The trial of civilians by military courts has been challenged in the Supreme Court and the hearing is ongoing (at the time of writing this report).

<sup>(18)</sup> UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 32, Article 14: Right to equality before courts and tribunals and to a fair trial, U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/GC/32 (2007); [https://digitallibrary.un.org/nanna/record/606075/files/CCPR\\_C\\_GC\\_32-EN.pdf](https://digitallibrary.un.org/nanna/record/606075/files/CCPR_C_GC_32-EN.pdf)

The regulatory framework makes it difficult for NGOs to work effectively. The policy for local NGOs/Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs) Receiving Foreign Contributions <sup>(19)</sup> adopted in November 2022 aims to reduce processing time and the backlog of registrations. Concerns persist that approval and reporting requirements, which consider each funding stream as a separate project, create an undue hurdle for their efficient and agile operation. In the aftermath of the 2022 floods, the Government gave blanket approval to local and international NGOs to carry out activities related to flood relief.

Only days before handing over to the caretaker government, the government passed more than 100 bills. Several of these laws <sup>(20)</sup> would in effect restrict fundamental freedoms and have been criticised across the country. The Official Secrets (Amendment) Bill gives sweeping new powers to the intelligence agencies. Similarly, the Pakistan Army (Amendment) Bill criminalises the defamation of the armed forces and sanctions the increasing role of the military in “national development and advancement of national or strategic interests”, i.e. in civilian areas, such as investment facilitation and economic development.

#### **Promotion of Human Rights in Pakistan**

An EU project implemented between 2019 and April 2022 supported Pakistan’s efforts to improve its compliance with human rights commitments. Its aim was to provide technical assistance and capacity development to key government ministries at federal and provincial level, with special focus on the criminal justice chain, to strengthen the capacity to implement Pakistan’s human rights agenda, and to raise public awareness, knowledge, and understanding of rights and how to protect them. The project also aimed to support Pakistan to comply with its obligations under the GSP+.

#### *5.1.3. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)*

The Constitution of Pakistan protects many economic, social, and cultural rights, including prohibitions on “slavery”, “forced labour”, and the employment of “a child below the age of fourteen years”. It guarantees the rights to “freedom of assembly”, “freedom of association”, and the “freedom of business, trade and profession” but does not include all internationally recognised economic, social, and cultural rights. The country faces difficulties with their realisation, according to the CESCR.

Pakistan experienced the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the labour market as well as massive inflation and devastating floods during the monitoring period, casting the light on existing structural discrimination and socioeconomic disparities, with poor Pakistanis suffering the worst of the impact. While the pandemic resulted in increasing health budgets, the pandemic laid bare Pakistan’s fragile healthcare system.

The Benazir Income Support Programme is a wide-ranging social protection and poverty alleviation programme. Expanded as Ehsaas Programme during the previous Government, its implementation has been challenging in the context of the current financial and economic crisis.

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<sup>(19)</sup> <https://ead.gov.pk/SiteImage/Policy/NGOs-Policy-2022.pdf>

<sup>(20)</sup> Official Secrets (Amendment) Bill 2023; Pakistan Army (Amendment) Bill, 2023; National Accountability (Amendment) Bill, 2023; The Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill, 2023; Elections (Second Amendment) Act, 2023; The Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Amendment) Bill 2023.



#### *5.1.4. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*

Pakistan consistently ranks very low on international rankings regarding gender equality and the status of women. The 2022 World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index ranks Pakistan as the 145<sup>th</sup> out of 146 countries <sup>(21)</sup>, while recognising that in 2022 it has made “significant improvement”, namely on economic participation and opportunity.

The Government continued to give high priority to the situation of women and girls. This has resulted in new legislation and policies to tackle persistent problems and in some instances seems to have led to improvements on the ground. Positive steps taken in the area of women’s rights include enacting the Anti-Rape Investigation and Trial Amendment Act 2021, the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Amendment Act, the Legal Aid and Justice Authority Act 2021, which forsee free legal aid to marginalised victims, including women, and the Enforcement of Women’s Property Rights 2021 Act. A Federal Domestic Violence Bill introduced in Parliament in June 2021 to punish all acts of physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, and economic abuse against women, children and other vulnerable persons in domestic relationships was referred to and criticised by the Council of Islamic Ideology, an advisory body to the Government. Domestic violence legislation exists in three provinces, but domestic violence is not always considered a criminal offense in these laws.

As in many other countries, civil society organisations and Government complaints cells registered a rise in complaints of domestic and online violence during the COVID-19 pandemic, indicating increased vulnerability of women under the confinement arrangements. The low rates of investigation and prosecution of perpetrators as well as the lengthy and difficult judicial proceedings for sexual and gender-based victims demonstrate the need for a more effective national policy on violence against women. To give an example, independent sources indicate a 200% increase in rape cases in Sindh province, with a conviction rate of less than 1%.

Women’s rights activists continue to face harassment and vilification online, on mainstream television, and in the Courts, including by senior political figures. Accusations of vulgarity, blasphemy, and foreign interference restrict the activists’ freedom of expression and put them at high risk of attack.

Following continued advocacy by women’s rights activists challenging the archaic and demeaning ‘two-finger test’ for sexual assault victims, the Lahore High Court declared such virginity tests unconstitutional in January 2021.

The secondary implementing regulation of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act 2018, the Transgender Persons Rules for Implementation, were notified in 2020. The Government has vowed to safeguard and implement this legislation, which was a significant achievement of the previous monitoring period. The protection of rights provided this Act are under political attack, as well as subject to legal challenge <sup>(22)</sup>. Further efforts are needed to ensure that acquired rights of vulnerable minorities are not rolled-back. Further, prompt, impartial, effective and gender-sensitive investigations of violence against transgender persons should be ensured.

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<sup>(21)</sup> <https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2022/>

<sup>(22)</sup> On 19 May 2023 the Federal Shariat Court ruled against the application of certain provisions of the Act <https://www.federalshariatcourt.gov.pk/Judgments/Shariat%20Petition%2005-I%20OF%202020%20Hammad%20Hussain%20v%20FOP%20-%20Transgender.pdf>



### 5.1.5. *Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)*

In response to the 2018 recommendation of the UN Committee on Torture, Pakistan adopted the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention and Punishment) Act 2022, which defines torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, creates the offence of torture, custodial death and custodial rape, and establishes the inadmissibility of statements extracted through torture. It tasks the Federal Investigation Agency, under the supervision of the NCHR, with the exclusive jurisdiction to investigate complaints. In order for this important law to bring tangible results, implementing rules will need to be adopted and resources and training will have to be devoted to its implementation and the capacity of the NCHR needs to be strengthened to enable its supervisory role. Meanwhile, despite existing laws and constitutional protections, torture is reported to be routinely used to coerce accused persons to confess as central part of investigation.

### 5.1.6. *Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)*

Legislative and regulatory progress has been made regarding children rights through the Zainab Alert Response and Recovery Act for Children 2020.

Although the judiciary and law enforcement agencies were seen to be more actively pursuing cases of crimes against children, the extent and severity of violence against children and their exploitation remained worrying. In 2020, 2,960 cases of child abuse were documented across the country, and in 2021, according to one estimate, a total of 1,896 cases were registered, although the number is likely to be higher.

Furthermore, early marriage remains a serious problem. Several legislative proposals have been submitted to the federal Parliament for approval, but remain pending. The Council of Islamic Ideology (an advisory body to the government) objected to the criminalisation of marriages under the age of 18 and advised the Government to handle the subject sensitively. Sindh is the only province in Pakistan, which, going beyond the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929, banned marriages before the age of 18 for both girls and boys, in line with the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

In October 2021, the Federal Shariat Court, confirming previous judgements by provincial high courts, declared that the tradition of *swara/vani* (i.e., girls, often minors, to be given for marriage as compensation to end disputes) was un-Islamic, and determined that setting a minimum age limit for girls' marriage by the state was not against Islam.

Another positive step was that the National Commission on the Rights of the Child became operational in 2021.

#### *Conclusions and priorities*

Since Pakistan's inclusion in the GSP+ in 2014, progress has been recorded in the legal framework related to human rights and its implementation. However, there are also some developments putting into question the progress achieved, thus causing concerns. Challenges remain with respect to Pakistan's capacity to uphold and protect the human rights of its citizens.

In the current review period, Pakistan has adopted important laws, such as those against torture, to protect journalists and media professionals, and to protect the rights of women

in the workplace. First steps have been taken to reduce the scope of the death penalty, while the adoption of a revised mercy petition procedure remains crucial.

Additional legislation, notably on further reducing the scope of the death penalty, on enforced disappearances, and on domestic violence at federal level are needed to align Pakistan's framework with its international commitments.

Important shortcomings persist in protecting the freedom of religion and belief, and the rights of minorities, in particular in view of the blasphemy laws and their abuse, as well as hate speech and violence against minorities. Freedom of expression, of the press and of association, as well as the rights of women and girls continue to be of concern.

Commitments have to translate into effective and sustainable implementation with concrete targets. Further capacity-building at both federal and provincial levels, notably of the commissions working on human rights, is instrumental towards achieving a more effective application and enforcement of the international conventions that Pakistan has ratified. Courts also play a crucial role in protecting fundamental rights. The role of civil society is essential for pursuing the human rights agenda. Rules regulating their activities should provide an enabling environment for them to operate freely.

## 5.2. ILO Labour Rights Conventions (Conventions 8-15)

### 5.2.1. Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining (Conventions No. 87 and No. 98)

The low unionisation rate and a weakly functioning social dialogue at national and provincial levels persisted during the reporting period. According to the ILO, 4.1% of workers are unionised<sup>(23)</sup>. In some provinces, such as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the number of registered unions increased; in others, such as Sindh, it decreased significantly, and the total number is far below previous years. The latest data reported include 1,398 unions registered in Punjab; 3,945 in Sindh; 467 in KP and 453 in Balochistan.

Provincial legislation was adopted to extend labour rights<sup>(24)</sup> to EPZ, and the Government confirmed that they are fully applicable to SEZ. Attention will need to be paid to implementation<sup>(25)</sup>.

Several groups continue to be excluded by the national and provincial industrial relations acts or face other legal obstacles to establish or join trade unions, in particular workers that are considered to belong to essential services, health workers and public servants. Limitations of trade unions' activities also exist in the banking, aviation, and shipbuilding sector. Unions of government employees were banned in Balochistan, and the Supreme

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<sup>(23)</sup> Decent Work Country Programme for Pakistan (2023–27), [https://www.ilo.org/islamabad/whatwedo/publications/WCMS\\_882381/lang-en/index.htm#:~:text=The%20Government%20of%20Pakistan%2C%20employers%E2%80%99%20and%20workers%E2%80%99%20organizations%2C,priorities%20of%20the%20ILO%27s%20tripartite%20constituents%20in%20Pakistan.](https://www.ilo.org/islamabad/whatwedo/publications/WCMS_882381/lang-en/index.htm#:~:text=The%20Government%20of%20Pakistan%2C%20employers%E2%80%99%20and%20workers%E2%80%99%20organizations%2C,priorities%20of%20the%20ILO%27s%20tripartite%20constituents%20in%20Pakistan.)

<sup>(24)</sup> For example, Sindh has extended trade union rights to agriculture and fishing workers and amended laws to bar contract workers on production relation work.

<sup>(25)</sup> The CEACR requested the Government in its report published in February 2023 to provide information on the exercise of trade union rights in the EPZs, including the trade unions registered and the number of unionised workers, as well as any instances in which trade unions have been refused registration and the reasons therefore (CEACR report 2023, page 203; and reiterated with slightly different focus on page 207).

Court ordered their reinstatement <sup>(26)</sup>. Private companies that are owned by the defence services do not have the right to form unions.

Workers Councils and Joint Management Boards exist in some companies and provide a channel of communication between management and employees. However, these are not as effective as independent trade unions, as they can be influenced by employers and do not provide a platform for collective bargaining. Management councils are not registered with the Directorate of Labour. Further, some unions, notably in brick kilns in Punjab, or in the agricultural and financial sectors, mention the existence of “pocket” or “yellow” unions, i.e., comprising employees that are chosen by management and which are easily dominated or influenced by the employer. Unions’ activities can also be hindered by the lack of formal employment contracts or the failure to respect them, hampering access to several rights, such as minimum wages and social security.

According to most of the existing industrial relation acts, collective bargaining is only permitted in a company if at least one trade union represents at least one third of the company’s employees. But in many companies falling under these acts, there might be no union reaching this threshold and therefore no collective bargaining is allowed <sup>(27)</sup>. Further, there are reports of harassment and intimidation of trade union members, and unions have reported difficulties during the process of registration. Examples provided include the fact that employers may be alerted to union registration activities by the authorities, when checking conditions such as the minimum number of workers. Companies can also undermine the registration process by claiming that they operate across provinces. In this case, the union would have to be registered at federal level (National Industrial Relations Commission - NIRC) and any previous requests made at provincial level will be denied. Even companies that have a better record of respecting labour rights do not typically have strong trade unions, including in the textile sector.

#### **International Labour and Environmental Standards Application in Pakistan's SMEs (ILES)**

This project is being implemented by the ILO in partnership with the EU since September 2016. This programme aims to promote sustainable and inclusive growth in Pakistan by supporting the economic integration of Pakistan into the global and regional economy. To this end, and to increase the competitiveness of the textile and leather sector in particular, the programme helps to enhance the compliance of Pakistan’s economy with international labour and environmental standards. The total budget is € 12.6 million, of which an amount of € 600 thousand is co-financed by ILO.

#### *5.2.2. Abolition of Forced Labour (Conventions No. 29 and No. 105)*

Legislation prohibiting forced and bonded labour is in place. However, reports from civil society indicate that forced labour continues to exist. Forced labour, primarily in the form of debt bondage is found across the country notably in sectors such as brick kilns, domestic work, carpet weaving, agriculture, and mining <sup>(28)</sup>. In these sectors, apart from mining, women account for a major share of the labour force. Bonded labourers from socially

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<sup>(26)</sup> Legislative changes in Balochistan in 2022 have addressed many of these problems, but not yet all (according to the CEACR report published in February 2023, page 200-201 and 206).

<sup>(27)</sup> Legislative changes in Balochistan in 2022 have addressed most of these problems for Balochistan; but for the federal level and for the other provinces, legislative changes are still needed (according to the CEACR report published in February 2023, page 207).

<sup>(28)</sup> Mechanisms that create the conditions for bonded labour include piece rate pay and the hiring via *thakedar* (third party contractors). The workers are given *peshgi* (advance salaries) as loans in times of need, to supplement salaries (which in many cases are below the minimum wage). This results in a cycle of bondage, particularly in agriculture and at brick kilns.

excluded groups, including minorities and migrants, suffer additionally from discrimination.

Pakistan also supports the ILO's Better Work Programme that aims at helping interested companies to comply with international labour standards. Inadequate resources provided to labour inspectorates and long judicial procedures continue to hamper law enforcement. Some provinces have a Labour Information Management System (LIMS), developed in cooperation with the ILO, whereby labour inspectors report each inspection visit by using an online tool. The frequency of these inspections is limited by the low number of staff, in particular inspectors, in each province. Punjab has 225 inspectors including 15 women, KP has 93, Balochistan has 76 (of which only 9 are factory inspectors while the remaining are focusing on shops), and Gilgit Baltistan has eight. Though relatively low, the number of female inspectors is increasing.

Some industries have put in place policies to tackle forced labour. However, this does not necessarily entail the whole supply chain. Provincial governments have yet to form 'vigilance committees' in all districts to ensure that violations of labour rights are monitored and penalised. In Sindh, out of 29 districts, District Vigilance Committees (DVCs) have been constituted in only 14 districts (2021 data). In addition, provisions of the national legislation establishing penalties involving compulsory labour need to be reviewed in order to ensure compliance with the ILO Conventions <sup>(29)</sup>.

### *5.2.3. Minimum Age for Work and Worst Forms of Child Labour (Conventions No. 138 and No. 182)*

In past years, the provincial governments have taken measures to stop children from working and to increase their school enrolment, notably in the Punjab province. However, in 2020, the ILO supervisory bodies noted with deep concern the significant number of children under the minimum age engaged in child labour, including in hazardous work. The number of out-of-school children remains high and they can be encouraged to leave school early where the minimum age for admission to employment is lower than the age of completion of compulsory schooling. There are very few prosecutions of cases filed by district vigilance committees and the limited capacity of labour inspectorates is a challenge as well. In 2020, while authorities concentrated on mitigating the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the closure of schools increased the risk of attracting children into the workforce. Limited awareness of the issue, including amongst domestic child workers, is also a factor.

Child labour surveys <sup>(30)</sup>, which were planned to be published in 2020 and form a basis for action to tackle the problem, are ongoing. At the time of finalising this report only Punjab and Gilgit-Baltistan surveys have been published. The results in Punjab show the prevalence of child labour at 13.4% and in Gilgit Baltistan at 13.1% (one out of seven children). Among children in child labour, 47.8% of children in Punjab aged 10-14 work under hazardous conditions, 9.9% work for long hours <sup>(31)</sup>. In the remaining provinces the child labour surveys are expected to be published in 2023.

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<sup>(29)</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100\\_COMMENT\\_ID,P13100\\_COUNTRY\\_ID:4054656,103166](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100_COMMENT_ID,P13100_COUNTRY_ID:4054656,103166)

<sup>(30)</sup> <https://labour.punjab.gov.pk/node/104> (Punjab); [https://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files/other/cls2018-19/CLS\\_GB\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](https://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files/other/cls2018-19/CLS_GB_Final_Report.pdf) (Gilgit Baltistan)

<sup>(31)</sup> Punjab Child Labour Survey 2019-20 report; page XIX.

#### 5.2.4. *Equal Remuneration and Elimination of Discrimination (Conventions No. 100 and No. 111).*

Equal remuneration for work of equal value and elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation still pose a serious challenge in Pakistan. In January 2022, the Parliament adopted an amendment to the Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act of 2010 that specifically includes domestic workers and brings Pakistan's legislation closer to ILO Violence and Harassment Convention No. 190, which Pakistan has not ratified yet<sup>(32)</sup>. In October of the same year the Act to provide for regulation of employment of domestic workers in Islamabad Capital Territory<sup>(33)</sup> was adopted by the Pakistani Parliament. The Balochistan Payment of Wages Act of 2021 introduced provisions on equal remuneration for 'work of equal value' and rules on objective job evaluation schemes were adopted which is a positive step forward, but the laws of other provinces still need to be brought into line with Convention No. 100<sup>(34)</sup>.

Religious minorities and other vulnerable groups continue to face discrimination at work. For example, they represent nearly 80% of low skill and pay jobs in sanitation. The Ahmadi community faces several forms of labour market discrimination<sup>(35)</sup>. The understanding of the concepts of employment discrimination and harassment remain low among employers, including public services.

There is a considerable gender gap with regards to labour force participation. According to the latest Labour Force Survey the participation rate of women in the labour market is less than 21.4% of working age Pakistani women, compared to almost 68% for men<sup>(36)</sup>. Most of the female labour force remains engaged in unpaid domestic work and low paid work. Furthermore, there seems to be a significant discrimination in the level of positions held. Women have a limited presence in high level occupations. In 2021, the female employed labour force in senior positions like managers was less than 1%. According to the Global Wage Report of the ILO, women in Pakistan earn 34% less than men<sup>(37)</sup>.

#### *Conclusions and priorities*

The authorities of Pakistan have taken some steps to align labour legislation with the ILO's labour standards and to tackle child labour and forced labour. The authorities also started activities to improve domestic workers' rights, enhance labour inspections and increase awareness about workers' rights and occupational safety and health. However, the overall situation remains of great concern notably when it comes to freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, which underpin the protection of the rights of workers in general.

Federal and provincial authorities should facilitate activities of trade unions, simplify registration (including of sectoral ones), uphold the right to collective bargaining and reinforce social dialogue. To strengthen trade unions and improve their capacity to register and operate effectively, areas of intervention should include decreasing the number of workers needed to establish a trade union, rules applying to trans-provincial activities of enterprises, and the protection of individual workers during the registration

<sup>(32)</sup> The legislation has yet to enter into force.

<sup>(33)</sup> [https://na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/636a06c54f3fd\\_803.pdf](https://na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/636a06c54f3fd_803.pdf)

<sup>(34)</sup> CEACR report of February 2023, pages 648-649.

<sup>(35)</sup> The CEACR urged the Government again in its report published in February 2023 to "take immediate steps to amend discriminatory legal provisions and administrative measures, and to actively promote respect and tolerance for religious minorities, including the Ahmadi" (CEACR report 2023, page 651).

<sup>(36)</sup> <https://www.ilo.org/surveyLib/index.php/catalog/7929>

<sup>(37)</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS\\_650553/lang--en/index.html](https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_650553/lang--en/index.html)



procedure. A complete list of registered unions should be available for all establishments. Awareness-raising activities are crucial to inform workers and employers about their rights and obligations, notably in EPZ and SEZ, following the extension of all labour rights to these areas.

Progress on effective implementation of legislation and its enforcement is necessary to address child labour and forced labour, including bonded labour, which remain high. Increased efforts to fight discrimination at the workplace are also needed. Child labour surveys in provinces where they have not been completed should be accelerated. Where finalised, the surveys need to be followed by concrete action plans.

The capacities of labour inspectorates need to improve considerably, in particular by substantially increasing the number of inspectors (including women) and providing the necessary equipment and trainings. In person on-site inspections, including without notice, should be conducted regularly across industries.

In summary, the priority areas where increased action is needed include facilitating the registration of trade unions, increasing the capacities of the labour inspectorates, and developing action plans based on the outcomes of the child labour surveys.

### 5.3. UN Conventions on Environmental Protection and Climate Change (Conventions 16-23)

#### 5.3.1. *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES)*

Pakistan has rich geographic and climatic conditions, which provide habitats to biodiversity. Nevertheless, despite the Trade Control of Wild Fauna and Flora Act of 2012 and the Trade Control of Wild Fauna and Flora Rules 2018 being in place to implement CITES in Pakistan, its national legislation status is listed as Category 2 by the CITES Secretariat. In July 2020, the Secretariat conveyed some observations regarding Pakistan's institutional arrangements, which the Government considers having addressed ahead of the CITES Conferences of the Parties in November 2022.

An example of the difficulties faced by wildlife in Pakistan is the snow leopard. Government agencies as well as NGOs (including local partner organisations) are working to address threats to these animals and their ecosystems in Pakistan. The 2018-2023 Pakistan Snow Leopard & Ecosystem Protection Programme (PSLEP) aims to address the above-mentioned risks.

A community-based Trophy Hunting Scheme is also in place to protect the population of *markhor* (wild goats). Hunting female or young *markhor* is prohibited with harsh penalties, and limited licences are granted for hunting older males, with 80% of the revenue attributed to local communities.

#### 5.3.2. *Waste Conventions: Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal and Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)*

The Pakistani Government adopted Standard Operating Procedures for the import of waste materials. A ban on the import of hazardous waste is included in the Import Policy Order of 2022. In July 2022, the federal cabinet approved the National Hazardous Waste Management Policy 2022, which aims to handle hazardous waste and rationalise its



imports. In this endeavour, the provinces, notably their environment protection agencies, have a critical role to play. The implementation plan for this Management Policy is in the process of elaboration. Press reports indicate that Pakistan imports waste from different parts of the world, and generates its own hazardous waste too, including hospital waste, e-waste, and pesticides.

With respect to POPs, the Government prepared an updated National Implementation Plan for Phasing out and Elimination of Persistent Organic Pollutants in 2020. This policy document is formulated in the context of the goal of environmentally sound and sustainable economic and social development for the country.

A project by the Ministry of Climate Change and the UNDP on POPs, completed in April 2021, updated the inventory of obsolete pesticides all over the country and tested some 4,184 transformers' oil in all the provinces. The way forward includes the elimination and destruction of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) contaminated oil and transformers by 2028.

POPs pesticides are no longer used in Pakistan as they are banned or not registered except for dicofol, added to the Stockholm Convention in May 2019, registered for use in cotton but no longer used since 2021.

### *5.3.3. Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety*

Pakistan faces challenges of environmental degradation in particular because of the disastrous floods in 2022, which were preceded by extremely hot temperatures. Experts believe that due to unsustainable and inefficient use of the limited water resources, the country could face acute shortage of water by 2040 if authorities do not take robust medium to long-term measures.

Biological diversity is declining due to human activities and the degradation of natural habitats, including forestry and mangroves. According to Pakistan's third national report cited by the CBD, 20 mammal species, 25 bird species, 6 types of reptiles, 5 types of fish and 8 marine molluscs are presently threatened, but these figures are likely to be underestimated.

A National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) prepared in 2018 remains valid until 2030, although the Global Biodiversity Framework adopted in December 2022 during COP15 of the CBD calls for all Parties to align their national biodiversity strategies and action plans, including national targets before CBD COP16 (2024).

Milestones of Pakistan's action include the establishment of a protected areas system including almost all major habitats and ecosystems and covering more than 10% of the country's territory, with a goal of increasing to 15%, providing job opportunities to 5,500 people and promoting ecotourism. Pakistan has designated 23 national parks, 97 game sanctuaries and 104 game reserves <sup>(38)</sup>.

The Government launched the "Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Programme" <sup>(39)</sup> with a total cost of about Rs. 125 billion (€440 million). The Ministry of Climate Change along with Provincial and territorial Forest and Wildlife Departments is responsible for implementing this project. Its overall objective is to revive forestation through native flora across the country.

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<sup>(38)</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=pk>

<sup>(39)</sup> An independent assessment of the sustainability and overall impact of the initiative is not available.

To regulate Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and their products related activities, a National Biosafety Centre (NBC) was established in Pakistan in April 2006 which since then provides the secretarial support to the Biosafety Committees. Since its establishment the NBC has processed more than 400 cases of GMOs and their products, related to laboratory genetic manipulation work, field trials for Research and Development (R&D), import and export, and commercialisation (sale and purchase). The Centre has been regulating the R&D and commercialisation of genetically modified cotton, corn, and other crops (sugarcane, chili, tobacco, wheat etc.). Pakistan has approved the commercial cultivation of GMO cotton and a few No Objection Certificates were issued for the commercial production of corn, though not commercialised.

#### *5.3.4. Conventions on Climate Change and Protection of the Ozone Layer <sup>(40)</sup>*

Pakistan faces serious exposure to climate change and suffered a dramatic environmental disaster in the tragic 2022 floods. Even before these floods, faster glacier melt, rising temperatures, shifting seasons, and irregular rainfall patterns have been all affecting the flow of the river Indus, which will have a growing impact on agriculture, food production, and lives. Pakistan had its hottest March and hottest April on record in 2022, with both months having national mean temperatures more than 4°C above the long term average <sup>(41)</sup>. The Government's actions in this area include support to climate resilient agriculture and increasing water security through the Recharge Pakistan Project.

Smog is another major issue in Pakistan's industrialised eastern Punjab region, where the provincial capital, Lahore, is clogged with smoke throughout the winter months. Authorities said they were working to solve the problem, which involved thousands of brick kilns.

Under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, on 21 October 2021 Pakistan submitted its updated ambitious NDC, aiming at an overall 50% reduction in projected emissions by 2030 with 15% from the country's own resources and 35% subject to provision of international grant finance. In addition - for enhanced contributions - new sectors and new gases have also been added to the updated document. To reach the target, Pakistan aims among others to shift to 60% renewable energy, and 30% electric vehicles by 2030 and completely ban imported coal <sup>(42)</sup>.

Government estimates show an emissions reduction of 8.7% between 2016 and 2021. The Government also announced it would adopt a Pakistan Cooling Action Plan (PCAP) by 2026. This would "identify the key cooling needs and prioritise actions for addressing current and future cooling demands with the minimum possible impact on the environment". A Climate Change Gender Action Plan is also under preparation.

While implementing the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, Pakistan phased out the first generation of Ozone Depleting Substances (ODSs) in 2009 and reduced the second generation ODSs by 50% in 2022 and aims to achieve 67.5% reduction by 2025. Pakistan is also conducting preparations for the ratification of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol <sup>(43)</sup>.

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<sup>(40)</sup> United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer.

<sup>(41)</sup> World Meteorological Organization.

<sup>(42)</sup> <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2022-06/Pakistan%20Updated%20NDC%202021.pdf>

<sup>(43)</sup> The Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol is an international agreement to gradually reduce the consumption and production of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).

### *Conclusions and priorities*

Pakistan has faced unprecedented environmental challenges caused by climate change in 2022, with extreme heat and severe flooding. Even before 2022, climate change and environmental degradation affected the environment of Pakistan putting pressure on the population, as well as on biodiversity and on wildlife. The Government of Pakistan has demonstrated commitment to environmental protection, including in the context of the Paris Agreement, and has taken important steps in implementation of other environmental conventions and agreements. On the other hand, the magnitude of the problems faced will require continued efforts and significant resources.

## **5.4. UN Conventions on Good Governance (Conventions 24-27)**

### *5.4.1. International Drug Control Conventions <sup>(44)</sup>*

Pakistan remains a transit country with high rates of opiate prevalence. The country is one of the world's active transit corridors for opiates and cannabis products, which are known to be trafficked through its long borders with Afghanistan and Iran. The construction of the fence along the border with Afghanistan is close to be completed according to the authorities. While it might alter smuggling routes and volumes locally and in the short term, it is unlikely to have a long-term effect. Pakistan's seaports, airports, postal services, and unpatrolled coastal areas allow illicit drugs to be distributed globally. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimates Pakistan is the transit country for 45% of the opiates produced in Afghanistan. Precursor chemicals used to produce heroin and methamphetamine also transit to Pakistan before global distribution. The Government has reported significant seizures of narcotics and precursors in the period 2020-2022, the majority of which constituted by hashish, followed by opium and heroin. Seizures of methamphetamines are more limited but growing.

Pakistan has taken some institutional steps towards decreasing transit through for example the establishment of Port Control Units (PCUs) and Air Cargo Control Units (ACCUs) in collaboration with UNODC.

The Government recorded around 78,000 and 93,000 drug related arrests in 2020 and 2021 respectively. Thanks to a legal reform adopted in August 2023, drug offences no longer carry the death penalty.

Pakistan's National Anti-Narcotics Policy of 2019 outlines supply reduction, demand reduction, and interagency and international cooperation as its main objectives.

Data relating to the number of drug users in Pakistan has been limited over the reporting period as the last survey was published in 2013 while the following only in 2022. The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) is running four model rehabilitation centres and reported almost 22,000 volunteer drug patients who have been treated in these centres in the period 2005-2021. In addition, the Government reports 96 treatment facilities and 33 drop-in centres run by the public and private sector. These efforts to adopt health-based approaches to drug use are a positive step, however they remain limited in a country with the population size of Pakistan. The Ministry of Narcotics Control has adopted a policy on opioids substitution

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<sup>(44)</sup> UN Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961), UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971) UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988).

therapy (OST) and has undertaken, in cooperation with UNODC and WHO, the process of educating treatment professionals.

An Inter-Agency Task Force (ATF) on Counter Narcotics comprises 32 different agencies in the country working on anti-narcotics, led by the ANF. However, the latter seems to have insufficient funding to launch dedicated operation to combat drug trafficking. Despite this limitation, the Law Directorate of the ANF pursued 862 cases of which conviction was awarded in 530 cases, 266 dormant cases were given final orders while 66 were acquitted with a conviction rate of 89% during 2021-22 <sup>(45)</sup>. Overall, 664 traffickers were convicted while 135 were acquitted during 2021-2022.

#### 5.4.2. *UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)*

In 2022 Pakistan's continued to feature low (140 of 180 countries) in the Corruption Perceptions Index of Transparency International with a small deterioration of score over the past 3 years <sup>(46)</sup>. Although the fight against corruption figures prominently in national political debates, the perception of civil society is that corruption continues to plague interaction with the public administration at different levels. Accusations and the fight against corruption has been highly politicised and instrumentalised to undermine political opponents, weakening the trust in the civilian leadership and justice system.

The EU supports the Government of Pakistan in its anti-money laundering and counter financing of terror efforts through a contribution agreement with United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for Pakistan's Action to Counter-Terrorism (PACT). Under this project, UNODC has facilitated combating financing of terrorism training to officers of the justice, law and order sector at inter-provincial level.

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) is Pakistan's main anti-graft agency responsible for eliminating corruption. NAB claims to have recovered more than USD 4.8 billion since it was established in 1999, but the consequences for convicted perpetrators are rarely severe. The NAB Ordinance of 1999 was amended in July 2023. This recently passed amendment gives the Chairman power to issue arrest warrants for individuals who refuse to cooperate in ongoing investigations. Arrested suspects can be held in custody for up to 30 days <sup>(47)</sup>.

The UNODC has launched the second review cycle of Pakistan in 2019 which covers Chapter II (Preventive Measures) and Chapter V (Asset Recovery) of the UNCAC. The review process has faced delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The reviewers visited Pakistan in June 2022. The report from the review has not been finalised at the time of writing.

Regarding money laundering and terrorism financing, in June 2018 Pakistan was put by the FATF on the list of jurisdictions under increased monitoring ("grey list"). In June 2022, the FATF confirmed that Pakistan had addressed all items of the 2018 and 2021 Action Plans and in September organised an on-site visit of the FATF/Asia Pacific Joint Group to confirm that the progress was tangible and sustained. After that visit, Pakistan was removed from the FATF "grey list" on 21 October 2022. The Government passed a law to establish the National Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Financing of Terrorism

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<sup>(45)</sup> Year Book 2021-22, Narcotics Control Division: [www.narcon.gov.pk](http://www.narcon.gov.pk)

<sup>(46)</sup> <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2022>

<sup>(47)</sup> <https://pakistancode.gov.pk/pdf/files/administrator0de01d110521bb3226cc107779213571.pdf>

Authority within Pakistan to act as a focal point for FATF and related organisations, and to review policy, laws and regulations to counter the financing of terrorism.

### *Conclusions and priorities*

Pakistan makes significant efforts in combating the trafficking of narcotics, but this remains a serious problem given Pakistan’s location as a transit country, as well as its domestic consumption. Although efforts are being made to move from harsh punishment to health-approaches to tackle drug use, these should be further improved.

There continues to be a perception, including among civil society, that corruption is pervasive. On the other hand, in 2022 Pakistan was deleted from the “grey list” of the FATF.

## **ANNEX: PAKISTAN – TREATY RATIFICATION AND REPORTING**

<b>Convention</b>	<b>Ratification status Reservations</b>	<b>Compliance with reporting obligations to monitoring bodies</b>
<b>Human rights conventions</b>		
1. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide	Ratified: 12.10.1957 No reservations	<b>No reporting obligations</b>
2. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	Ratified: 21.09.1966 No reservations	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations</b> • Last report submitted on 28.10.2021.
3. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	Ratified: 23.06.2010 Reservations to multiple articles under the Covenant: Arts. 3, 6, 7, 12, 13, 18, 19, 40. <sup>(48)</sup>	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations</b> • Last report submitted on 16.06.2022. (was due by 28.07.2020.).
4. International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights	Ratified: 17.04.2008 No reservations. <sup>(49)</sup>	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations</b> • Last report submitted on 24.05.2023. (was due by 30.06.2022.).
5. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	Ratified: 12.03.1996 Accession subject to the provisions of the Pakistan constitution. Reservation to Article 29(1)	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations</b> • Last report submitted on 09.10.2018. • Next report due by 01.02.2024.
6. Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	Ratified: 23.06.2010 Reservations made upon ratification; reservations made to Article 8, 28 and 30 remain <sup>(50)</sup>	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations</b> • Last report submitted on 16.06.2022.
7. Convention on the Rights of the Child	Ratified: 12.11.1990 No reservations	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations</b>

<sup>(48)</sup> Pakistan has reservations to multiple articles under the Covenant: Arts. 3, 6, 7, 12, 13, 18, 19, 40.

<sup>(49)</sup> A formal reservation was made (“with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the rights recognized in the present Covenant, Pakistan shall use all appropriate means to the maximum of its resources”) but in substantive terms this constitutes a declaration rather than a reservation

<sup>(50)</sup> Article 8: ‘The Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan declares that pursuant to Article 8, paragraph 2, of the Convention, it does not take this Convention as the legal basis for cooperation on extradition with other States Parties’.

Article 28: ‘In accordance with Article 28, paragraph 1, of the Convention, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan hereby declares that it does not recognize the competence of the Committee provided for in Article 20’.

Article 30: ‘The Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan does not consider itself bound by Article 30, Paragraph 1 of the Convention’.



Convention	Ratification status Reservations	Compliance with reporting obligations to monitoring bodies
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Last report submitted on 03.08.2023. (was due by 11.06.2021).</li> </ul>
<b>Labour conventions <sup>(51)</sup></b>		
8. Convention concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour, No. 29	Ratified: 23.12.1957	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Latest CEACR comments: 2021.</li> <li>Latest report received in 2020.</li> <li>Next regular report due in 2023.</li> </ul>
9. Convention concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, No. 87	Ratified: 14.02.1951	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Latest CEACR comments: 2023.</li> <li>Latest report received in 2022.</li> <li>Next report due in 2025.</li> </ul>
10. Convention concerning the Application of the Principles of the Right to Organise and to Bargain Collectively, No. 98	Ratified: 26.05.1952	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Latest CEACR comments: 2023.</li> <li>Latest report: 2022.</li> <li>Next report due in 2025.</li> </ul>
11. Convention concerning Equal Remuneration of Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value, No. 100	Ratified: 11.10.2001	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Latest CEACR comments: 2023.</li> <li>Latest report received in 2021.</li> <li>Next report due in 2024.</li> </ul>
12. Convention concerning the Abolition of Forced Labour, No. 105	Ratified: 15.02.1960	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Latest CEACR comments: 2021.</li> <li>Latest report received in 2019.</li> <li>Next regular report due in 2023.</li> </ul>
13. Convention concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation, No. 111	Ratified: 24.01.1961	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Latest CEACR comments: 2023.</li> <li>Last report received: 2021.</li> <li>Next report due in 2024.</li> </ul>
14. Convention concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, No. 138	Ratified: 06.07.2006 Minimum age specified: 14 years	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Latest CEACR comments: 2021.</li> <li>Latest report received in 2020.</li> <li>Next regular report due in 2023.</li> </ul>
15. Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, No. 182	Ratified: 11.10.2001	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Latest CEACR comments: 2021.</li> <li>Latest report received in 2020.</li> <li>Next regular report due in 2023.</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental conventions</b>		
16. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora	Acceded: 20.04.1976 No reservations	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations in last two years (not compliant in 2019).</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Annual Report</u> (2021) submitted on 12.04.2022.</li> <li>Annual Report for 2020 submitted on 12.03.2021.</li> <li>Annual Report for 2019 not submitted.</li> <li>Previous annual reports submitted: 2018 AR on 04.02.2019; 2017 AR on 04.04.2018; 2016 AR on 02.05.2017; 2015 AR on 18.02.2015.</li> <li>Last (2019-2020) <u>Implementation Report</u> submitted on 12.03.2021.</li> <li>2018-2019 Implementation Report submitted on 04.02.2019.</li> <li>2015-2017 Implementation Report submitted on 02.05.2017.</li> <li>Earlier IRs submitted for 2013-2014, 2011-2012 and 2007-2008.</li> <li><u>Annual Illegal Trade report</u> submitted for 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2020.</li> </ul>

<sup>(51)</sup> Reservations do not apply in the ILO system, so there is no relevance to providing information on reservations under each of these conventions.



Convention	Ratification status Reservations	Compliance with reporting obligations to monitoring bodies
17. Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer	Acceded: 18.12.1992 No reservations	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most recent data for 2020 was submitted. An ODS licensing system has been established.</li> </ul>
18. Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal	Ratified: 27.06.1994 No reservations	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Last National Report for 2020 submitted on 29.12.2021.</li> <li>• National Report for 2019 submitted on 28.12.2020.</li> <li>• National Report for 2018 submitted on 31.12.2019.</li> <li>• National Report for 2017 submitted on 25.01.2019.</li> </ul>
19. Convention on Biological Diversity	Ratified: 27.06.1994 No reservations	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Last (sixth) <u>National Report</u> due 31.12.2018 submitted in July 2019.</li> <li>• Previous National Reports submitted: NR5 on 31.03.2014; NR4 on 08.01.2010; NR3 on 01.12.2006; NR2 on 09.11.2001; NR1 on 16.01.2008.</li> <li>• Second <u>National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan</u> submitted on 13.04.2018.</li> <li>• First NBSAP submitted 17.10.2000</li> </ul>
20. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	Ratified: 01.06.1994 No reservations	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated NDC submitted on 21.10.2021.</li> <li>• Latest (Second) National Communication submitted on 09.08.2019.</li> <li>• First Biennial Update Report (BUR) submitted on 28.04.2022.</li> <li>• BURs have not been submitted in 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2020.</li> </ul>
21. Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety	Ratified: 02.03.2009 No reservations	<b>Compliant with reporting obligations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fourth National Report on Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol updated on 12.06.2020.</li> <li>• Third National Report submitted on 20.10.2016.</li> <li>• Second National Report submitted on 12.09.2014.</li> <li>• First National Report not submitted</li> </ul>
22. Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants	Ratified: 17.04.2008 No reservations	<b>Partially compliant with reporting obligations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated NIP for Phasing out of POPs under Stockholm Convention published on 12.02.2020.</li> <li>• Updated NIP addresses required amendments of COPs 4-6, but not those of COP 7 (update due 15.12.2018) and COP 8 (update due 18.12.2020)</li> <li>• Fourth National Report submitted on 12.06.2020.</li> <li>• Fifth Report submitted on 24.08.2022.</li> <li>• Third National Report due 31.08.2014 submitted on 22.01.2016.</li> </ul>
23. Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	Ratified: 11.01.2005 No reservations	<b>No reporting obligations</b>
<b>Good governance conventions</b>		

Convention	Ratification status Reservations	Compliance with reporting obligations to monitoring bodies
24. United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs	Ratified: 09.07.1965 <sup>(52)</sup> No reservations <sup>(53)</sup>	<b>Partially compliant with reporting obligations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No reports and statistics provided for 2020 under the Convention against Illicit Trade (2021 not yet reported on)</li> <li>• Other reports and statistical information provided, with few exceptions.</li> </ul> <b>Review by INCB</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Last INCB mission took place in 2012.</li> <li>• No indication of non-compliance in INCB reports</li> </ul>
25. United Nations Convention on Psychotropic Substances	Acceded: 09.06.1977 No reservations	
26. United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances	Ratified: 25.10.1991 No reservations	
27. United Nations Convention against Corruption	Ratified: 31.08.2007 No reservations <sup>(54)</sup>	<b>No reporting obligations</b> <b>Compliant with notification requirements</b> <b>Review by UNODC &amp; peer review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive summary of first cycle review published in 2017.</li> <li>• Review in 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle ongoing; no report issued yet.</li> </ul>

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<sup>(52)</sup> Participation in the Convention by virtue of ratification, accession or succession to the Protocol of 25 March 1972 or to the 1961 Convention after the entry into force of the Protocol: 02.07.1999

<sup>(53)</sup> Reservations made upon the original ratification in 1965 were: “The Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan will permit temporarily in any of its territories: (i) The quasi-medical use of opium; (ii) The use of cannabis, cannabis resin, extracts and tinctures of cannabis for non-medical purposes, and (iii) The production and manufacture of and trade in the drugs referred to under (i) and (ii) above.”

<sup>(54)</sup> Declaration made in line with Article 66(3) of UNCAC that Pakistan does not consider itself bound by the provisions of Article 66(2), arbitration and potential referral of cases to the International Court of Justice.