



World Council of Churches

Commission of the Churches on International Affairs World Council of Churches

UN Human Rights Council 37th Session
Item 6: UPR Outcomes, Pakistan
16 March 2018

Thank you Mr President,

The World Council of Churches Commission on International Affairs expresses its on-going concern about discriminatory blasphemy laws in Pakistan. Since the UPR last November, there have been 10 registered cases of blasphemy in Pakistan involving 1 Muslim, 8 Christians and 1 Hindu. The cases of blasphemy against minorities highlight shocking police brutality and a biased judicial system. Lynchings by mobs, including of university student Mashal Khan in 2017, raise serious concerns about the misuse of the blasphemy laws.

Last month's case of blasphemy against Patras Masih and the reported torture by the investigation authorities of his cousin Sajid Masih further illustrates the ill-treatment perpetrated by law enforcement authorities.

During the recent UPR, Pakistan received 5 recommendations to repeal and 7 recommendations to review the blasphemy laws. We strongly believe that in order to ensure equal rights to every citizen of Pakistan, it is critical that the Government accepts and implements these recommendations:

We call upon the Government of Pakistan to:

1. Repeal all discriminatory legislation, namely Blasphemy laws (CRPC Section 295 B, C and 298 A, B and C).
2. To establish statutory bodies to examine the treatment by police of victims and their family members during the investigation of blasphemy cases.
3. To legislate against and punish any form of incitement of hate and violence, particularly when loud speakers are used to mobilize violent mobs.
4. To take measures to reform the police and judiciary to ensure the protection and promotion of religious minorities

Thank you Mr. President