

# Brussels conference backs European Parliament call for suspension of Pakistan's GSP+ trading status with EU

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, May 11, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [A conference](#) at the Brussels Press Club discussed the resolution by the European Parliament to suspend Pakistan's Generalised Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP+) trading status on the basis of continued human rights abuses.

The EU's GSP+ gives developing countries a special incentive to pursue sustainable development and good governance. To be eligible countries have to implement 27 international conventions on human rights, labour rights, the environment, and good governance



Brussels Press Club, March 8th 2023

“

We should continue our battle for freedom of religion or belief in Pakistan, & the EU has means to put pressure on Pakistan. It is the GSP+ program.”

*Peter van Dalen MEP*

In return, the EU cuts its import duties to zero on more than two thirds of the tariff lines of their exports.

The European Parliament's call for suspension of Pakistan's GSP+ status has been backed by a huge majority of MEPs, and has the support of every political group. The European Commission, however, has consistently refused to respect the will of Parliament.

The conference, held under the auspices of Brussels-based NGO Human Rights Without Frontiers, was chaired by Willy Fautré, co-founder and director of the organisation, and was introduced by Peter van Dalen, a member of the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights, and its Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Manel Mselmi, International affairs Advisor of MEPs of the European Peoples' Party at the European Parliament referred to the challenges faced by women in Pakistan. With restricted

access to education employment opportunities are limited. Also forced conversion of Christian, Hindu, and Sikh girls is common. The murder of Pooja Kumari.

Jonathan de Leyser of Christian Solidarity Worldwide discussed the shocking murder of Pooja Kumari, an 18 year old Hindu girl shot dead after three men entered her home demanding that she marry one of them, first converting to Islam. Her refusal cost her life.

The tragic case is not isolated: such laws as exist to protect young people in Pakistan are simply not enforced.

Pakistani lawyer Jibran Nasir criticised the provincial authorities, saying: "Under the PPP government, child marriage laws aren't worth more than the paper they're printed on.

"Doors to forced conversion of minor girls are open because child marriages are facilitated by corrupt and ignorant officials," he added. The EU does have a monitoring instrument in place in the form of a biennial reporting system. However, the term "biennial" appears to be interpreted by the European Commission somewhat loosely. The fourth report, which was due to be published towards the end of 2022 has yet to appear (it is not the first of the reports to be published a year late).

In response to a request for clarification from EU Today a Commission official wrote in an email that the "aim" is to publish the report over the coming Summer. Interestingly, the email was sent just minutes after the conference began.

Also participating in the conference were José Luis Bazan, COMECE Adviser on Migration, Asylum & Int'l Religious Freedom: Marco Respinti, Italian journalist, member of the International



Peter van Dalen MEP



Pooja Kumari, 18, murdered for resisting a forced marriage.

Federation of Journalists (IFJ) , essayist, translator, and lecturer: Akmal Bhatti, lawyer (Pakistan), lawyer and chairman of Minorities Alliance Pakistan: Tabassum Yousaf (Pakistan), High Court lawyer.

Gary Cartwright

EU Today

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[YouTube](#)

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/633054603>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2023 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.