

Question for written answer E-015865/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)

Subject: VP/HR - Recent attacks on Ahmadis in Jehlum, Pakistan

A number of concerned constituents from the Ahmadi community in Scotland have brought to my attention the recent attacks, on Friday 20 November 2015, in the Jehlum district of north-eastern Pakistan. A chipboard factory and an Ahmadi mosque were torched, later forcing more than 200 local Ahmadis to flee their homes in a nearby village. These attacks occurred due to a false accusation of blasphemy against a local Ahmadi employee of the factory.

The 1984 Ordinance XX of Pakistan makes it a criminal offence for an Ahmadi to 'indirectly or directly pos[e] as a Muslim'. Moreover, the Criminal Law Act of 1986 Section 295-C, otherwise known as the 'Blasphemy Law', prescribes the death penalty for blasphemy.

As Pakistan is a beneficiary of the EU's Generalised Scheme of Preferences+ (GSP+), it is therefore obliged to fulfil the requirements of 27 core international conventions on human and labour rights. As the GSP+ stipulates, each country is subject to close monitoring by the Commission in respecting all 27 core international conventions.

1. Is the VP/HR aware of the recent attacks against Ahmadis in Jehlum, and what assessment does she make of them?
2. As Pakistan is a GSP+ beneficiary, can the VP/HR clarify that the Commission is monitoring the situation in Pakistan in ensuring its respect of human rights?