



Human Rights Commission  
of Pakistan

# Pakistan's International Legal Obligations

A Human Rights Perspective

Supported by



**FRIEDRICH NAUMANN  
FOUNDATION** For Freedom.

Pakistan



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# 1. Introduction

This document is intended to share the lessons and recommendations derived from consultations conducted by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan on Pakistan's international legal obligations in human rights. The target audience included non-government organisation (NGO) workers, human rights defenders, lawyers, journalists, government officials and members of civil society. These consultations were conducted in major cities of Pakistan; Islamabad, Peshawar, Karachi, Gilgit, Quetta and Lahore, with 152 people in total.

The aim of these consultations was:

- To acquaint participants with International Treaties signed and/or ratified by Pakistan
- To explain how these international obligations are implemented by the State
- To highlight the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the way they intersect with human rights in the context of Pakistan, and how they are translated into legislation and policy, including the challenges and opportunities they entail
- To elucidate how citizens can benefit from International treaties and,
- To provide the target audience a platform to engage in a constructive discussion highlighting the issues and challenges they face when trying to meet the international human rights obligation of core human treaties.
- To learn and recommend approaches towards meeting international human rights obligations.

We are grateful to the experts who facilitated these consultations; Mr. Saroop Ijaz, Ms. Aliya Khan, Mr. Kamran Arif, Asad Jamal, and Sara Malkani, and Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom for their support and Ms. Anisa Dar for compiling this resource.

## **2. The UN Human Rights Monitoring System**

### **2.1 Core Human Rights Treaties and Treaty Based Bodies: An Overview**

The UN human rights monitoring system comprises (a) UN Charter-based bodies, including the Human Rights Council, and (b) bodies created under international human rights treaties and made up of independent experts mandated to monitor State parties' compliance with their treaty obligations. Charter bodies include the former Commission on Human Rights, the Human Rights Council, and Special Procedures. See Appendix A: Pakistan's International Legal Obligations section 2-3 for details on their activities and core functions.

The UPR is a key mechanism of the UN Human Rights Council which assesses the human rights situation of all UN member states with the objective of improving the fulfilment and compliance of the human rights obligations and commitments of the member states. Through this process, several countries have been forwarding recommendations to Pakistan to improve its overall human rights situation by initiating constitutional amendments and reforms, legislation, improving institutional arrangements for protection of human rights, resolving gender issues—including violence against women, trafficking in women and girls, and improving women's health—protecting rights of individuals and vulnerable groups, reducing enforced disappearances, improving economic, social to housing, clean water and sanitation, providing social security and alleviating poverty to improve their human rights situation. See Appendix A: Pakistan's International Legal Obligations Section 3 and 4 for details on the process and an overview of recommendations received by Pakistan from the third UPR cycle.

#### **Core Human Rights Treaties**

There are nine core international human rights treaties, the most recent one – on enforced disappearance – having entered into force on 23 December 2010. Since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, all UN Member States have ratified at least one core international human rights treaty, and 80 percent have ratified four

or more. The following 09 core treaties have acted as a foundation for international human rights:

1. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) 1965
2. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966
3. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) 1966
4. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 1979
5. Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) 1984
6. Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1989
7. International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICMW) 1990
8. International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CPED) 2006
9. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) 2006

### **Treaty-Based Bodies**

There are currently ten human rights treaty bodies, which are committees of independent experts. Nine of these treaty bodies monitor implementation of the core international human rights treaties listed above while the tenth treaty body, the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture, established under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, monitors places of detention in States parties to the Optional Protocol.

The ten human rights treaty bodies that monitor implementation of the core international human rights treaties include:

- Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
- Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)
- Human Rights Committee (CCPR)
- Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- Committee against Torture (CAT)
- Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW)
- Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT)
- Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

- Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED)

Treaty Bodies review periodic reports submitted by States, most of them issue General Comments or Recommendations regarding the provisions of the various treaties, and many consider individual communications and undertake inquiries (see Appendix A: Pakistan's International Legal Obligations Section 6 for detail).

## 2.2 Pakistan's Status on International Legal Obligations

The table below, reproduced from Appendix A: Pakistan's International Legal Obligations, indicates which of the core nine

Human Rights Treaty	Status and Date of Ratification
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)	Ratified on 23 June 2010
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)	Ratified on 17 April 2008
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	Signed on 12 March 1996
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)	Ratified on 21 December 1966
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	Ratified on 20 November 1990
Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)	Ratified on 23 June 2010
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)	Ratified on 5 July 2011
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICMW)	Not ratified
International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ICED)	Not ratified

treaties Pakistan has signed and ratified.

### 2.3 Treaty Bodies Observations

The table below, reproduced from Appendix A: Pakistan's International Legal Obligations, summarizes some of the main concerns raised by Treaty Bodies in concluding observations on Pakistan's most recent periodic reports.

Human Rights Instrument / Monitoring Body	Main Concerns
<p>ICCPR (Human Rights Committee)</p>	<p>'Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan', 12 July 2017</p> <p>The State party should consider withdrawing its remaining reservations to articles 3 and 25 with a view to ensuring the full and effective application of the Covenant (para 8)</p> <p>The Committee is concerned that so-called honour killings continue to occur; that the qisas (equal retaliation) and diyat (financial compensation) laws are reportedly applied to some of these cases, and that some tribal councils in remote areas continue to exercise jurisdiction over these cases (para 13)</p> <p>The Committee notes with concern that the State party lifted its moratorium on the death penalty in December 2014 and that, since then, it has been one of the States with the highest rates of executions. It is particularly concerned that the death penalty is applied to crimes other than the 'most serious crimes' within the meaning of article 6 (2) of the Covenant... (para 17)</p> <p>While welcoming the establishment of the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances, the Committee remains concerned by the insufficient power and resources allocated to the Commission; the non-compliance with the Commission's orders by the relevant authorities; and the high number of cases brought before the Commission that remain unresolved, with no criminal proceedings brought against perpetrators (arts. 2, 6, 7, 9, 14 and 16) (para 17).</p>

<p>Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights</p>	<p>Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan, 23 June 2017</p> <p>The Committee is concerned that Covenant rights have not been fully incorporated into the domestic legal order and, in particular, that the Constitution of the State party does not recognize economic, social and cultural rights as fundamental rights that are justiciable, but recognizes them only as policy guidelines (para 5)</p> <p>The Committee recommends that the State party consider revising articles 25–27 of the Constitution with a view to ensuring that the Constitution prohibits discrimination on all grounds, including colour, language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity or other status (para 20)</p> <p>The Committee recommends that the State party...[r]eview its legislation, including the West Pakistan Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Act, 1962, and the Qanun-e-Shahadat Order (Law of Evidence), 1984, with a view to removing all provisions that discriminate on the basis of gender (para 34)</p>
<p>Committee on the Rights of the Child</p>	<p>Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Pakistan, 3 June 2016</p> <p>While it welcomes the 2013 amendments to the Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act to increase the marriage age for both boys and girls to 18 years, the Committee remains concerned about the disparity between the minimum legal age for marriage for boys (18 years) and that for girls (16 years) in all other provinces (para 16)</p> <p>The Committee is seriously alarmed by reports of the execution of several individuals for offences committed while they were under the age of 18 years, or where the age of the individual was contested following the lifting of the moratorium on the death penalty in December 2014... (para 24)</p>



### 3. Human Rights Reporting and Implementation Challenges

Based on the observations shared in the previous section, the UPR comments discussed earlier and the recommendations made to Pakistan reflect that Pakistan is facing challenges in implementing Human Rights and fulfilling their international obligations - HRCP with the support of FnF conducted a series of consultations to highlight reporting and implementation challenges with participants hailing from non-government organisations (NGO), human rights forums, legal system, media, government organizations and civil society focused and highlighted reporting and implementation challenges.

#### 3.1 Constitutional Law versus International Public and Customary Laws

Experts explained that Customary international laws are accepted by all nations regardless of any treaty or convention to validate them and can be established by showing (1) state practice and (2) opinio juris. Unlike some laws (such as freedom of association which can be curtailed during disasters), these laws cannot be curtailed. Rights such as Right to life, the rights of Refugees and migrants, Humanitarian interventions



etc. do not need a treaty or state signatures and should be followed by virtue of being a nation. There is a lot of room to violate these laws especially for dualist states.

During the consultations, a primary concern rose in regards to Pakistan being a dualist state rather than a monoist state. Pakistan is a dualist state, where even international public law can only be implemented if it is incorporated into domestic law. However, state is held responsible for its failures to comply with international obligations. Further detail on reservations pertaining to treaties protecting the rights of women, minorities and children is given in section 2.3 of Appendix A: Pakistan International Obligations. It is important to note that as per the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, a reservation would be invalid if it was incompatible with the object and purpose of the treaty (Article 19).

Participants highlighted reservations as examples and how certain reservations on these treaties tend to go against the true spirit and objectives of the said treaties. Pakistan has not adopted any legal framework for translating the CEDAW provisions to its domestic laws and similarly their domestic constitution is incompatible with CAT's obligations. In addition, most of Pakistan's criminal law, inherited from the British rule, is outdated and doesn't specifically define and criminalize all forms of torture. Several anti-torture draft bills are pending in Parliament for several years already but have not received the



necessary support from the government or the majority of parliament. In addition, corporal punishment and other forms of violence against children – whether in educational institutions, at work, or at home – are not absolutely prohibited in the country. A popular reservation by Pakistan is based on religious and the Islamic law where Pakistan states that “The Islamic Republic of Pakistan declares that the provisions of Articles XYZ shall be so applied to the extent that they are not repugnant to the Provisions of the Constitution of Pakistan and the Sharia laws.” which gives them their right to exercise their own laws dictated by religion and cultural norms. One of the female participants from Balochistan highlighted how due to these reservations and dualist status, In May 2017 a proposed Child Marriage Restraint (Amendment) Bill seeking to revise the legal age of marriage to 18 years for girls was moved into was passed by the standing committee only to be shot down by the Council of Islamic Ideology that indicated that marriage can be performed at any age, but rukhsati (moving to the husband's house) would only be allowed after the age of 18. She highlighted how international law would have preceded constitutional law, especially for this case which violates the rights of children and women alike, if Pakistan had been a monoist state.

Kashmir as a disputed territory was also discussed in the consultations. The leading political party of India, BJP, fulfilled its election promise of removing the special status for Jammu and Kashmir in India's Constitution through revoking their special status by invoking Article 370. This constitutional development precedes the international public law leading to several human rights violations. In 2019, there have been 296 ceasefire violations in July, 307 in August and 292 in September. There were 68 violations in July in 2017 and 13 in 2018, 108 violations in August in 2017 and 44 in 2018, and for September 2017 and 2018, the figures stood at 101 and 102, respectively<sup>1</sup>.

On the other hand, a case brought to light which discourages fulfilling international obligations due to lack of localization of the international laws of the United States of America's ratification status on CEDAW. United States of America has been refusing to ratify CEDAW as the States believe that their federal law cannot be dictated by international

1. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/11/07/in-the-line-of-fire-along-kashmirs-line-of-control/>

public law. International organizations like Amnesty International have been advocating to break the following myths being given as reasons regarding the USA's reluctance to ratify CEDAW<sup>2</sup>:

1. U.S. ratification of CEDAW would give too much power to the international community with the provisions of the Convention superseding U.S. federal and state law
2. "Discrimination" is too broadly defined in CEDAW, and its implementation in the U.S. would result in unwise laws and "frivolous" lawsuits.
3. CEDAW will be used to destroy the traditional family structure in the U.S. by redefining "family" and the respective roles of men and women, or could be used to usurp the proper role of parents in child rearing.
4. CEDAW supports abortion through its promotion of access to "family planning
5. The treaty will threaten single-sex schools and require "gender-neutral" textbooks.
6. U.S. ratification of CEDAW might be used to sanction same-sex marriages.



2. [https://www.amnestyusa.org/files/pdfs/cedaw\\_fact\\_sheet.pdf](https://www.amnestyusa.org/files/pdfs/cedaw_fact_sheet.pdf)

7. The treaty will require legalization of prostitution. Due to the aforementioned reasons, it is noted that conservative societies are in favor of protecting their sovereignty through their local laws. They are supportive of countries having their ideologies, respecting their own cultural norms and keeping national security matters separate from international obligations. However, in some cases that evidently is not the best route to take.

### 3.2 Status of Monitoring Bodies and Implementation Cells

Pakistan has implemented some of the recommendations from the second cycle of the UPR in 2012. It established the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR), a statutory authority to monitor human rights, but which still needs to be properly empowered to operate independently. Similarly, commissions that have been formed in pursuance of international commitments are somehow associated with government institutions. As per the Paris Principles, Fiscal and administrative autonomy needs to lie with treaty monitoring bodies and commissions. These bodies need to be diverse and inclusive. And human rights commission need to be empowered to receive and act on





complaints. These commissions are formed to comply with international obligations and should not be a part of the government but in reality that is not the case

During the consultations in Lahore, a member of the Treaty Implementation Cell shared that they are administratively placed under the Human Rights and Minorities Affairs Department, Government of the Punjab. Whereas, cell members need to be placed directly under Chief Minister instead of members being redirected to different industries to coordinate for treaty compliance; "We are not treaty coordination cell" says the representative. It was also highlighted that rules of business were not created and despite the UPR and EU recommendations, they have been unable to disassociate themselves from the ministry. Unfortunately, the department is not as receptive to receiving recommendations as they should be which limits their ability to report violations or implement international obligations. GAP analysis of international obligations of environment, labor laws, CEDAW and CAT was submitted to the department. Based on which a bill was proposed which is still lying unattended in the home department. The Chief secretary suggested to investigate that matter but their interests are misplaced as they do not want to receive observations and recommendations on these violations. Due to being weak administratively and financially the cells tend to be powerless.

Similarly in Quetta, the issue of treaty bodies comments being recommendations only was highlighted, as none of the recommendations are legally binding. Even though the reputation of a nation is based on their political will to implement these recommendations, but they rarely follow as there are no legislations or autonomous bodies in place to make the state accountable.

In the Karachi consultation, the treaty implementation cell has a very small team without any resources or capacity to register or forward complaints. The cell was being chaired by the secretary of law, parliamentary affairs and human rights department and they are still short of the next successor. The cell does not get any complaints as women and development, labor and planning and development department gets the complaints instead. Lack of unions to advocate for such rights also aggravates the problems. And even the unions that exists do not have the capacity or awareness to promote human rights.

Therefore, due to lack of legislative framework, fiscal and administrative authority and an association with state departments - treaty monitoring cells despite their establishment cannot operate effectively and efficiently.

### 3.3 Stakeholder Reporting Challenges

As per of the UPR mechanism, the review stage is conducted using three primary sources: (1) a national report from the SUR; (2) a compilation prepared by the OHCHR of the recommendations to the SUR by UN human rights mechanisms; and (3) information provided by other stakeholders. The final basis of review is information provided by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), national human rights institutions (NHRIs), human rights defenders, academic institutions, research institutes and regional organisations. More information on the UPR process can be found in Appendix A: Pakistan's International Obligations, section 4.4.

During the consultations, it was noted that some participants from the civil society were engaged in the process of Alternative/Shadow reporting in the past. Participants from Quetta reported on CRC, CEDAW (through Aurat Foundation) and other human rights violation. However, one of them highlighted that the process was unsafe and reporting would get many civil society members in trouble. She



specifically mentioned the arrival of intel agencies at her doorstep to discourage her from engaging with EU representatives. Participants in all consultations were in agreement of the resistance that the civil society sector and human rights activists face while reporting human rights violations.

The NGO shrink was discussed in detail whereby at least 18 INGOs have been ordered to bring their operations to a halt, especially those who have been working on children, women and minorities<sup>3</sup>. They noted how this will reflect badly on Pakistan in the UPR, and how the state has been unable to provide reasonable explanations for this issue. Most of the NOCs have been given to non-rights based organizations and have gone through a stringent process to ensure the state that they are implementing “controversial” projects. For those organizations that want to pursue human rights work, face several obstacles during registration and receiving no-objection-certificates from the government. Even though the process was expected to take a few months only has resulted in organizations waiting for years. And the space seems to diminish everyday under the guise of “conflict with values”<sup>4</sup>.

Several enforced disappearances have been associated with stakeholders taking bold initiatives to support freedom of expression and information movements. The case of Ms. Gulalali Ismail was also highlighted who spoke out against the army has fled the country after months in hiding. Gulalai Ismail is now in the US, having eluded a country-wide hunt and a travel ban imposed by Pakistan's authorities<sup>5</sup>.

On the other hand, besides the fear of state, due to low levels of awareness and sensitization stakeholders are unable to report. In Karachi, one of the participants pointed out that due to incompetence and lack of awareness people do not report violations. He quoted a labor law report published with no record of any labor and occupational health and safety hazard. While referring to another textile industry study, he shared that employers would not report violations primarily due to lack of

3. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-pakistan-ngos/pakistan-tells-18-international-ngos-to-leave-actionaid-idUSKCN1ME1N3>

4. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1189752>

5. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-49765178>



awareness and knowledge regarding labour rights, low literacy level, poor compliance and low wages at the workplace<sup>6</sup>.

A participant from Quetta shared a personal anecdote regarding his conversation with a local school for girls. The participant suggested the study of ethics, other religions, the environment and other social issues that need to be integrated into the school curriculum to build the capacities of these students from an early age. He even offered resource persons to develop such lesson plans but the principal was skeptical and accused him of following an “NGO agenda”. During the same consultation, Ms. Aliya Khan, the facilitator also shared her experience with the Punjab government. They managed to introduce a chapter on gender in the social studies curriculum in 2016, which was to be taught accordingly with topics ranging from CEDAW obligations, especially discouraging early child marriages with respect to health problems that girls face due to these unions and delivering children at an early age. However, during one of her unannounced monitoring visits to one of the schools, she noted that the teacher skipped the chapter on gender entirely whereas a chapter regarding a woman's role as a homemaker and her “routine from 7:00 AM till 10:00 PM, without any breaks, inclusive of household chores, taking care of the husband and the children were taught in quite detail”. She identified lack of teacher training and awareness as the main reason for not being able to transfer human rights related knowledge to the younger generation.

Similarly, in Karachi it was pointed out that international refugees whether of Afghan origins or other muhajirs are not even aware of their rights and face harassment, abuse and other difficulties in their everyday lives due to no awareness or access towards human rights instruments. During the consultations in Islamabad, a female lawyer highlighted low capacity and knowledge of fellow colleagues who were unaware of the difference between violence and torture. She shared that three of the female judges in court, dealing with cases regularly were not aware of CEDAW, CAT and its obligations. She was appalled at the situation and took it upon herself to orient around seven female judges on these important core human rights treaties.

Overall, there was a general consensus among participants that due to

6. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/30623919>

shrinking NGO spaces, low levels of awareness and no protection mechanisms in place for people who report, the stakeholders faced drastic challenges in reporting human rights violations to OHCHR.

### **3.4 Cultural and Religious Influences**

As mentioned earlier in section 3.1, most participants and experts deemed the role of religion and sharia law to ingrain this lack of enactment of international laws into constitutional laws as problematic. As “The Islamic Republic of Pakistan declares that the provisions of Articles XYZ shall be so applied to the extent that they are not repugnant to the Provisions of the Constitution of Pakistan and the Sharia laws.” is a regularly applied reservation of Pakistan to many treaties protecting the rights of children, women and minorities.

During the Lahore consultation, Article 19 associated with Freedom of Expression was discussed which has been limited by the additional subject to morality, decency, glory of islam, security and defense. This addition has been used at several occasions to rob citizens the right to freely express themselves. We have signed treaties and conventions, whereby the agreement is to have non-discrimination based on religion. However, Ahmaddiyas have been declared as non-muslims through our local laws.

Religion has been used to overpower international public law, especially customary laws. Citizens have faced difficulties in registering inter-racial marriages, conversions from Islam to another religion are punishable by death and after the Asia Bibi and Mashal Khan cases it was evident that the blasphemy laws have been a pathway to human rights violations. Pakistan's Supreme Court has acknowledged that “the majority of blasphemy cases are based on false accusations” and are driven by ulterior motives. Such motives, the report says, are rarely scrutinized by the authorities and can vary, from professional rivalry, to personal or religious disputes, to seeking economic gain<sup>7</sup>.

During the Karachi consultations, forced conversions were discussed in great detail. There is a rise in the number of forced conversions being

7. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa33/5136/2016/en/>

8. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1494475>

reported in Sindh<sup>8</sup>. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) stated during the 33rd Annual General Meeting that “This appears to be a systematic, organised trend and needs to be seen in the broader context of the coercion of vulnerable girls and young women from communities that are already marginalised by their faith, class and socioeconomic status”<sup>9</sup>.

Similarly, cultural influences and gender stereotypes have served as barriers to integrating human rights into the curriculum. The example of glorifying women as domesticated home-makers in textbooks mentioned in the previous section also reflects the rigid roles that Pakistan has defined for women.

Muslim countries across the world take Shariah as to be the source of law, and even then end up contradicting in their interpretations of the text. As in the case of CEDAW, where a lot of muslim countries has raised sanctions but they different from country to country. The example of Morocco was highlighted in one of the consultations, where the reservations are different from the ones given by Pakistan - even though both based their sanctions on Shariah law. Morocco even went on to withdraw some of its reservations but in 2014, The Working Group inquired about the State's progress in withdrawing its reservation to CEDAW Articles 2 and 5. where the Government in its reply reiterated its position that those Convention provisions apply only if not going against Islamic Sharia and only if not contrary to Articles 34 and 36 of the Family Code of Morocco (Moudawana)<sup>10</sup>.

While highlighting the issue of child marriages, a female participant in Quetta rightly pointed out that the Islamic law/Shariah does not define an age for the child, which allows policy makers to prescribe a different bracket of age to a child depending on the law. Therefore, overall it was noted that cultural norms and religious beliefs have acted as barriers to fulfilment of international obligations, especially on the state and the

9. <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2019/04/08/hrcp-concerned-over-forced-conversions-in-sindh/>

10. [https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/WG/Discrimination AgainstWomenNationality.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/WG/Discrimination%20AgainstWomenNationality.pdf)

rights of vulnerable groups such as women and minorities.

### **3.5 Abuse of Power and Negligence by State and Non-State Actors**

HRCP expressed its grave concern at the exponential rise in the number of recommendations Pakistan had received from its peers with respect to human rights concerns in the country. The Commission was encouraged by the recommendations that had been 'supported' by Pakistan under the 2017 review, which included the reduction of poverty and inequality; making enforced disappearance a criminal offence and ensuring that all allegations of enforced disappearance and extrajudicial executions were thoroughly investigated; ensuring that all perpetrators of torture were brought to justice; the right to a fair trial for all; and preventing impunity for crimes against journalists and media workers. However, during consultations in Balochistan, enforced disappearances were discussed in detail where participants highlighted how they are rising and there is no legislation in place to protect them. The Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances (COIED) has 2178 cases unresolved as of now and the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance has more than 700 cases pending from Pakistan which reveals an abuse of power by state and non-state actors involved in these violations.

Pakistan has the norm of “selecting” government officials rather than electing candidates. The consultations also revealed a general consensus on positions being assigned based on nepotism, bribery or plain favoritism. Participants did not feel that the interests of the state and non-state actors (such as the army) were rooted in the citizens' well-being but their own personal gains and use of power. Consultations in Balochistan while referring to the CRC, mentioned that the state is responsible for ensuring that a child is not living or working in hazardous environments, along with a prohibition of child labor. But in reality, underage are still working in companies that are involved in international trade. The legal mechanisms to cater to this problem are weak and political influenced. He shared that Balochistan has only established a Child Protection Cell in 2016 and does not even have its Rules of Business made yet. And upon inquiry of members, a CSO representative found out that 18 members of the unit are parliamentarians without any knowledge or authority on child rights.

Another female participant, highlighted the weakness and negligence of the state machinery by also sharing that the state needs to ensure registration of all its citizens and local government has to be onboarded for a drive registering all children born in Pakistan. Due to unknown age figures, at several instances child labor and child marriage cannot be reported because there is no authentic source to define age groups for those children. Child militancy was also discussed as a byproduct of jihad and recruitment for violence by state and non-state actors. Sahil submits shadow reports to CRC Periodic review where alarming figures regarding the violation of child rights have been shared but state refuses to acknowledge these problems.

Bureaucratic bottlenecks and personal motives leading to delays was another pertinent issue brought to light during the consultations. Ms. Aliya Khan, former PCSW member, shared regarding the development of at least 200 indicators for CEDAW reporting and procured sources of information from various departments in Punjab so CEDAW's status in Punjab was reported in a robust manner. However, the report was submitted in February 2017 whereas it was due in September 2017 but so far no comments or feedback has been given to cater to the concerns and comments made. She also shared how the department encouraged misreporting, as every 6 months, Punjab Board of Investment and Trade was asked to report on GSP plus and would instruct the team to keep it "soft". Data collection on women's issues was done prior to this request and the numbers were not allowed to be shared as part of the report. The department was not interested in the gaps or the issues, but in achievements such as Mr. Shahbaz Sharif's women empowerment packages, Women Development Department and PCSW budget and other milestones that resulted in selective reporting.

The lack of interest and political will of the government institutes and political parties to advocate human rights. During the Karachi consultation, a participant shared their experience regarding encouraging a government department to align their work with the SDGs. And even though, Sindh govt has a unit to support this but these departments fail to deliver. He shared how one of the government institutions felt they were "Overburdened" and since officials do not have the time to take extra responsibilities, the CSP representative was expected to share guidelines to support integrating SDGs in their framework. However, even after supporting them, he does not know if those rules are being implemented and the common citizen has access

to no information on the basis of which they can be held accountable. The expert in Karachi also highlighted regarding World Bank Group's latest verdict, on July 13 2019 which lead to a \$4.08bn penalty and \$1.87bn in interest – against Pakistan in a case filed by the Tethyan Copper Company (TCC). The TCC had claimed \$11.43bn in damages following the rejection by the provincial government of a leasing request from it. The TCC said it had invested more than \$220 million by the time the Pakistan government in 2011 unexpectedly refused to grant them the mining lease needed to keep operating<sup>11</sup>. Cases like Reko Diq mine case were also discussed to highlight state corruption and incompetence which lead to deterioration of our financial resources and downfall of our international reputation.

Participants were appalled at the lack of access to public documents and provision of limited or negligible information by the state and non-state actors. The direct violation of Right to Information that have been translated into provincial acts was highlighted; CM Sindh approved a 55 million rupee grant in the previous financial year for the Sindh Information Commission, but it has been a year and nothing has been utilized to procure proper staff or resources for the commission. Similarly, the occupation of Kirthar National Park without offering stakeholders access to the baseline study was also termed as a violation of not only environmental international standards but also the right to information act<sup>12</sup>.

Many participants felt that the political parties and state institutions do not support the effective implementation of Freedom of Information acts on federal and provincial levels to avoid transparency and accountability. Only selective “positive and soft” image is being displayed to the international community through grand gestures; like appointing Ms. Krishna Kumari as member of the Senate of Pakistan in March 2018. As she is the first Hindu Dalit woman and the second Hindu woman to hold this position, the parties are trying to portray inclusion, tolerance and diversity while enforced conversions and disappearances are on the rise.

As mentioned in Appendix A: Pakistan's international obligations,

11. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1508341>

12. <http://shehri.org/kirthar-national-park.html>

Pakistan has chosen to 'note', rather than 'support' key human rights principles such as :

- reporting the investigation and prosecution of security forces that commit human rights violations and abuses;
- Amending discriminatory laws against marginalised groups, including women and girls and ethnic and religious minorities;
- Protecting the rights of the child more effectively, particularly during counter-terrorism activities; desisting from issuing death sentences and executing juveniles;
- And taking effective measures to prevent the abuse of blasphemy legislation and the use of violence against religious minorities

This negligence and systematic abuse of power by the establishment, political parties and defense forces has led to challenges in reporting for stakeholders and several human rights violations ranging from restricted freedoms and enforced disappearances.

### **3.6 Status of Gilgit-Baltistan**

As Gilgit-Baltistan's constitutional status has been tied to the resolution of the Kashmir dispute, the region has been deprived of the rights that each Pakistani citizen enjoys. While steps have been taken by the government to address the people's issues such as self-governance orders of 2009 and 2018 but these have fallen short of fulfilling human rights obligations.

In January 2019, the Supreme Court of Pakistan on Thursday, while giving a written order regarding the constitutional status of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) and the grant of fundamental rights to its citizens, ruled that the powers of the top court also extend to the region. The written order also states that no part of the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan can be abolished or amended without proper legislation<sup>13</sup>.

During the consultation in GB, the participants complained regarding the federal government needs to keep in mind the demands of GB's people when formulating policy. There are various demands which the state can

13. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1458109/top-courts-powers-extended-to-gilgit-baltistan-rules-supreme-court>

meet to contain the situation such as empowering the GB Assembly and allowing freedom for political activists to operate freely. GB's fundamental rights are being violated; cases of enforced disappearances, and torture were highlighted. One of the participants shared how they felt even Kashmir was "better off" because they at least had an assembly and a constitutional act in place to protect their citizens and implement laws. GB's existence as a state without any identity and independence is a violation in itself. It is Pakistan's government's responsibility to protect GB's citizens and offer them the same rights as any territory that is not an independent entity, will be governed as per the rules they will use for their own territories. But for GB there is no constitution protection and the order can be revoked by executive authority at any time.

On the other hand, resources of the region are being utilized without GB benefitting compared to other provinces. Due to the lack of oversight, it is alleged that a number of foreign companies with the support of corrupt officials have exploited more resources than permitted to the detriment of the local economy. The absence of an effective regulatory state, as well as failure to develop a long-term strategy to harness labour force potential, has led to a rise in exploitation of GB's resources. The role of Chinese mining companies procuring land and mining minerals without any restriction or regulation of the federal or local government has been looked down upon by the locals<sup>14</sup>.

The flawed structure of the so-called government body known as the GB council consists only 06 people only, and the 7th person is the PM himself. The governor has also been "selected" by these authorities. The participant complained that all the revenue generating resources have been given to the council and it feels like a "colonial arrangement".

The status of GB is in violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, UDHR and International Customary Laws and the lack of independent regulatory bodies leads to further violations of human rights. Media lacks access to these violations and there is no human rights commission either to support the victims. The issue of the National

14. [https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/pok-people-protest-in-gilgit-baltistan-against-pak-decision-to-lease-land-to-china-119092200699\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/pok-people-protest-in-gilgit-baltistan-against-pak-decision-to-lease-land-to-china-119092200699_1.html)



Accountability Bureau (NAB) acquiring the Special Education Center in GB was also not covered by a lot of media. A social media campaign was conducted as the government was planning to give the land to a Government Medical College<sup>15</sup>.

Therefore, existing acts related to the rights of vulnerable groups are being compromised due to lack of legislative framework and authority to regulate institutions. Such as in the case of women's rights, the Women Development Department is holding "cooking classes" to domesticate women instead of strengthening policy implementation. Even CEDAW violations are commonplace as females don't have protection against harassment and not having property laws is a societal norm that is widely accepted. Hunza region as per its customary law prohibits women from owning property. The case of Bibi Sitara was discussed where the Bench legitimized the woman's inheritance share but only due to the will and authoritative source of the Mirs of Hunza<sup>16</sup>.

Building on this, difference in arbitration norms of GB and the Hunza/Ismaili community were also highlighted. Whenever an Ismaili approaches the court, they are asked to consult their own arbitrary councils. Participants shared that there is no difference between the roles of these bodies and jirgas, and victims do not feel satisfied or secure by decisions taken by these bodies. As per the popular belief and research studies, Hunza is a very peaceful community with 100% literacy, 0% crime rate but that is mainly due to low population over all and lack of reporting. A female participant grieved saying, that the Number nizam dari system still in place where the incumbent will decide everything from "my clothes to my marriage prospects".

On the other hand, NGOs and civil society members generally lack the knowledge of instruments to uphold human rights obligations. And even those who do have the capacity to advocate, are not allowed to do so. The issue of shrinking spaces for civil society members has amplified in GB. Participant shared that Sungi Foundation was working in GB to advocate for constitutional privileges for the local people and they were asked to terminate their operations. No coverage of GB's issues has

15. <https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/parents-irked-as-nab-occupies-special-education-centre-in-gilgit-baltistan20190707094134/>

16. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/07329113.2013.781447>

taken place since their last report was released in 2009. It was reported that the Digital Human Rights activist, Ms Nighat Dad was meant to join a dialogue with civil society but was sent back as soon as she landed at the Islamabad airport. Local people have been convicted for reporting human rights violations through the usage of Schedule – IV of Anti-Terrorism Act in Gilgit-Baltistan. Using this act and through allegations, the civil society has been restricted to protest or share any observations on the deteriorating conditions of human rights in GB. These orders cannot be challenged in the supreme court or the chief court. The judiciary either has no resources to support or is restricted by the power of the state and non-state actors. A participant shared a personal experience of having to sign an undertaking received from the Home Office mandating him to not express his opinions or share any material that is anti-state - this took place after a petition against the schedule IV was filed at Chief Court of GB.

According to HRCP, there has been “rampant misuse” of Pakistan's Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997 (ATA) by G-B authorities particularly against young activists<sup>17</sup>. Civil society groups and political activists told HRCP the misuse of this act after Pakistan's National Action Plan for countering terrorism and extremism in December 2014. HRCP found that “hundreds of individuals” had been imprisoned under this act in GB, and it was being used to target locals who have been raising issues related to the “rights of the people”.

17. HRCP, “Gilgit-Baltistan: Aspirations of identity, integration and autonomy”, p.18.

## 4. Recommendations for Strengthening Human Rights Implementation

### 4.1 Sensitization and Capacity Building of stakeholders

We cannot improve our conditions until people are not sensitized through a human rights centric syllabus - Quetta consultation participant, 2019

As a solution to reduce gaps in human rights knowledge and an increase in capacity of stakeholders especially lawyers, civil society and media, rigorous efforts of human rights sensitization need to be made. Teacher training and capacity building of educational institutions is the key to reducing violations against vulnerable groups such as women, minorities and children. Recommendations to include Life Skills Based Education (LSBE) at early ages were also given. State needs to take responsibility for strengthening capacities of the parliamentarians and other people in office to Through education department, sensitize teachers and students alike.

Some of the recommendations received during the last UPR, taken from the Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review - Pakistan (A/HRC/37/13) on 29th December 2017<sup>18</sup> also highlight the importance of sensitization:

*152.60 Strengthen awareness-raising and implementation of the National Action Plan for Human Rights (Ethiopia);*

*152.51 Continue efforts to enhance the operational effectiveness of its national human rights institutions as well as strengthen activities to promote education and awareness of human rights (Bhutan);*

18. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G17/370/42/PDF/G1737042.pdf?OpenElement>

## 4.2 Localization of SDGs and Human Rights 12

*Parliamentarians never discuss social issues, people are working on less than minimum wages and even political parties have an attitude of just closing complaints instead of doing something about them! - Lahore consultation participant, 2019*

Alignment of state actors and non-state actors to commit to the fulfillment of international obligations via their translation in domestic laws has proven to be the most effective way of realizing human rights. Mr. Saroop Ijaz during his consultation in Lahore highlighted a success of the Supreme Court in its judgment in suo motu case regarding Peshawar church bomb blast asked the federal government to constitute a National Council for minorities' rights. "The function of the said Council should inter alia be to monitor the practical realisation of the rights and safeguards provided to the minorities under the Constitution and law. The Council should also be mandated to frame policy recommendations for safeguarding and protecting minorities' rights by the Provincial and Federal Government" said the 32- page judgment, authored by Chief Justice of Pakistan Tassaduq Hussain Jilani<sup>19</sup>. Announcing what could be a landmark judgment on minorities' rights, the supreme court also asked the government to form a special task force for the protection of worship places of minorities. Such initiatives need to be highlighted and only through localization of international laws and SDGs can we strengthen implementation of Pakistan's human rights obligations.

Through involvement of Local government bodies and their capacity building, the localization of the targets set by the SDGs 2030 agenda, a drastic improvement in the status of human rights obligations can be achieved as also suggested by United Cities of Local Governments Association (UCLGA)<sup>20</sup>.

Some of the recommendations received during the last UPR, taken from the Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review -

19. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/724188/sc-asks-govt-to-form-a-national-council-for-minorities-rights/?amp=1>

20. [https://www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/towards\\_the\\_localization\\_of\\_the\\_sdg\\_0.pdf](https://www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/towards_the_localization_of_the_sdg_0.pdf)

Pakistan (A/HRC/37/13) on 29th December 2017<sup>21</sup> also highlight the importance of integration of human rights obligations in local institutions:

*152.238 Ensure that madrasas, within the territory of Pakistan, operate in line with the human rights obligations of Pakistan (Afghanistan);*

*152.38 Accelerate the domestication of the provisions of the international human rights instruments to which it is a party (Zimbabwe);*

*152.39 Continue efforts to review national laws to ensure that they are in line with their international human rights obligations (Cuba);*

### **4.3 Empowering Treaty Monitoring Bodies**

Following the leads of states, such as Nepal, Sri Lanka where once treaty monitoring bodies are made, their legislative infrastructure allows them to work independently - Lahore consultation participant, 2019.

Legislation and policy making to separate treaty bodies from state institutions needs to be in place for these bodies to work effectively. The EU report noted the establishment of Treaty Implementation Cells (TICs) at the federal and provincial levels as a positive development but without any fiscal and authoritative autonomy these bodies will just remain a positive development on paper (See Appendix A: Pakistan's international obligations, section 3.2 for more details on EU's recommendation).

Some of the recommendations received during the last UPR, taken from the Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review - Pakistan (A/HRC/37/13) on 29th December 2017<sup>22</sup> also highlight the importance of fiscal and authoritative autonomy of these bodies:

*152.52 Further enhance the operational effectiveness of the national human rights institutions in accordance with their mandates through the*

21. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G17/370/42/PDF/G1737042.pdf?OpenElement>

22. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G17/370/42/PDF/G1737042.pdf?OpenElement>

*provision of adequate human and financial resources (South Africa);*

*152.53 Adjust the mandate and responsibilities of the National Commission for Human Rights in accordance with the Paris Principles and provide it with sufficient financial resources to carry out its activities effectively (Guatemala);*

*152.54 Enhance the independence and effectiveness of the National Commission for Human Rights through provision of adequate human and financial resources (Indonesia);*

#### **4.4 Collective Movement and Lobbying by Stakeholders**

Consultation sessions of such nature should happen more regularly to help people understand their rights and instruments that can be used to protect them - GB Consultation participant, 2019

More organizations like HRCP and Shirkatgah need to lobby and through collective movement advance their demands to uphold human rights obligations. The incident shared by a participant from Gilgit-Baltistan regarding establishing rights of Persons with Disabilities (PWD) is an achievement that came about through unionization and joint efforts of the civil society. Through working with the Social Welfare Department, job quota for PWDs was increased in Gilgit-Baltistan where previously a non-functional committee was in place. Another participant highlighted the arrest of 12 people of jirga involved in giving verdicts increasing vani cases in Skardu where the police officer was also suspended as a result of failure to fulfill their role.

Sindh, home to the majority of the Hindu population in Pakistan, became the first province to pass legislation for the registration of Hindu and other non-Muslim marriages through the Sindh Hindu Marriage Bill, which was later enacted as the Sindh Hindu Marriage Registration Act 2016<sup>23</sup>. This act was only possible due to collaboration and advocacy of civil society organizations such as HRCP.

Even during the last UPR, Haiti recommended that Pakistan *establishes a systematic consultation and follow-up mechanism with civil society and non-governmental organizations on the implementation of recommendations formulated in the framework of the universal periodic review (Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review - Pakistan (A/HRC/37/13) on 29th December 2017)*

## **4.5 Increasing engagement with International Mechanisms**

*State actors are participating at international forums and lying blatantly. Human rights activists are kidnapped and taken away. We are becoming a POLICE/FASCIST STATE! - Quetta consultation participant*

It is important to note that even though the state machinery uses their position to disrupt the state of human rights, especially for minorities and women - Pakistan has ended up making laws entirely due to international pressure. The Child Marriages act and other acts related to women's rights are primarily in place due to international pressure. However, due to state misreporting and low engagement of civil society with international instruments, international mechanisms are unable to protect human rights in Pakistan. Therefore, people are encouraged to submit shadow reports or at least engage with organizations involved in the process. Many participants during these consultations realizing the importance of this engagement even volunteered to support reporting activities of different rights based organizations. *People if not directly, then can approach through intermediary organizations reporting to international forums such as HRCP.*

23. <http://www.pas.gov.pk/uploads/acts/Sindh%20Act%20No.IX%20of%202016.pdf>

## Consultations' Schedule Pakistan's International Legal Obligations

Date	Venue	Trainer
16 July 2019	Avari Hotel, Lahore	Mr. Saroop Ijaz
3 August 2019	Serena Hotel, Quetta	Ms. Aliya Khan
19 August 2019	Regent Plaza Hotel, Karachi	Ms. Sara Malkani
19 September 2019	Islamabad Hotel, Islamabad	Mr. Kamran Arif
20 September 2019	Shelton's Rezidor, Peshawar	Mr. Kamran Arif
23 September 2019	Serena Hotel, Gilgit	Mr. Asad Jamal



***UPR Recommendations to Pakistan:  
International Instruments and Treaty Bodies***

<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Issue</b>
152.1 Ratify the international conventions and protocols on human rights in order to enable its people to enjoy all their rights	Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International instruments</li> </ul>
N/A Adjust its national laws to the international obligations undertaken	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General</li> </ul>
152.38 Accelerate the domestication of the provisions of the international human rights instruments to which it is a party	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International instruments</li> </ul>
152.39 Continue efforts to review national laws to ensure that they are in line with their international human rights obligations	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General</li> </ul>
152.45 Strengthen the role and effectiveness of the Ministry of Human Rights and the National Commission for Human Rights, in accordance with international human rights standards	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Human Rights Institution</li> </ul>

152.139 Bar military courts from trying civilians and allow their monitoring by international observers and human rights organizations	Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Justice</li> </ul>
152.150 Amend its national legislation on defamation and blasphemy in accordance with international human rights law	Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freedom of opinion and expression</li> <li>• Freedom of religion and belief</li> </ul>
N/A Consider ratifying other international human rights instruments to which it is not a party yet	Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International instruments</li> </ul>
N/A Review of all relevant legislation and procedures to ensure systematic incorporation of international human rights obligations and their implementation on all levels of the government	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International instruments</li> </ul>
N/A Align its national legislation with the ratified international human rights treaties	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International instruments</li> </ul>
N/A Continue working on the harmonization of its legislative domestic framework with the international human rights instruments to which it is a party	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International instruments</li> </ul>


N/A Promote the review of national legal provisions in the area of human rights, including constitutional provisions, to bring them into line with international standards	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General</li> </ul>
N/A Continue evaluating its national capacities so as to be in line with the international human rights treaties it has acceded to or ratified	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International instruments</li> </ul>
N/A Concentrate on the implementation of the international human rights instruments that have been ratified by Pakistan	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International instruments</li> </ul>
N/A Maintain its policy of broadening and strengthening international co operation in the sphere of human rights	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other</li> </ul>
N/A Implement international human rights obligations within Federally Administered Tribal Areas and refrain from detention that contravenes international standards of due process	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detention</li> <li>• International instruments</li> </ul>
N/A Strictly adhere to international human rights law and international humanitarian law and international refugee law in its fight against terrorism	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asylum seekers – refugees</li> <li>• International humanitarian law</li> <li>• International instruments</li> <li>• Counter-terrorism</li> </ul>

N/A Pursue this route of promoting and protecting human rights and to be encouraged by the international community, more particularly the Human Rights Council.	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General</li> </ul>
N/A Continue cooperating with treaty monitoring bodies regarding follow-up and implementation of its treaty obligations	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treaty bodies</li> </ul>
N/A Extend a standing invitation to the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council and accept the competence of the treaty bodies in complaints, inquiry and urgent action procedures	Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special procedures</li> <li>• Treaty bodies</li> </ul>
152.2 Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty	Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Death penalty</li> <li>• International instruments</li> </ul>
N/A Address the issues of child abuse, child trafficking, sexual exploitation and involuntary servitude by strict enforcement of national legislation adopted in conformity with relevant international instruments, and through adoption and implementation of a comprehensive action plan to combat these issues, including awareness-raising and	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human rights education and training</li> <li>• Rights of the Child</li> <li>• Trafficking</li> </ul>

<p>education of parents, law enforcement staff and members of the judiciary.</p>		
<p>152.6 Ratify the First Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Death penalty</li> <li>• Disabilities</li> <li>• International instruments</li> <li>• Torture and other CID treatment</li> <li>• Treaty bodies</li> <li>• Women’s rights</li> </ul>
<p>152.7 Ratify the Optional Protocols to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and to the Convention against Torture, as well as the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Death penalty</li> <li>• ESC rights – general</li> <li>• International instruments</li> <li>• Women’s rights</li> </ul>
<p>152.14 Ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforced disappearances</li> <li>• International instruments</li> <li>• Labour</li> <li>• Migrants</li> <li>• Torture and other CID treatment</li> <li>• Treaty bodies</li> </ul>

<p>152.14 Ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforced disappearances</li> <li>• International instruments</li> <li>• Labour</li> <li>• Migrants</li> <li>• Torture and other CID treatment</li> <li>• Treaty bodies</li> </ul>
<p>152.74 Adopt comprehensive legislation to combat all forms of discrimination, in line with its obligations and international standards</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other</li> </ul>
<p>N/A Continue its important efforts in fighting terrorism, with adequate support and understanding of the country's constraints from the international community.</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public safety</li> </ul>
<p>N/A Continue its ongoing review of national laws to ensure that they are in line with its international human rights law obligations</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General</li> </ul>
<p>N/A Review of all relevant legislation and procedures to ensure systematic incorporation of international human rights obligations and their implementation on all levels of the government</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International instruments</li> </ul>





Supported by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) held a series of six training workshops across Pakistan to increase citizens' awareness of the country's international legal obligations under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the human rights treaties it has signed or ratified. Under international law, Pakistan is obligated to ensure fundamental freedoms to **all** citizens, and especially to vulnerable groups such as women, children and people living with disabilities. Pakistan is also obligated to protect its citizens' economic, social and cultural rights, and to prohibit and prevent the practice of torture. Yet public awareness of these obligations remains limited. To this end, the workshops held by HRCP underscored the need for Pakistan's state and citizens to acknowledge, understand and bolster the importance of its international human rights obligations. This document captures the content of the workshops and the discussions and recommendations that emerged.