

Adopted resolution

Human Rights Violations by the State of Pakistan

EGP urges European Parliament and European Commission to actively pursue a peaceful resolution for the abolishment of the Anti-Ahmadiyya Ordinance and the Blasphemy law.

Context

Pakistan is for the West an important geo-political ally. It is the country which harbours Al-Qaida and Taliban fighters who are fought against with all military means. The Green Party knows that peace is not brought by war. Therefore, the civil government and the civil society in Pakistan have to be strengthened within by changing discriminatory laws in the Pakistani constitution.

To understand the situation we have to go back in Pakistani and Western history. 1977 the dictator Zia ul Haq took over and in 1979 sentenced Zulfikar Ali Bhutto who was the legitimate Pakistani Premier minister, the father of late Benazir Bhutto, to death.

The invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet army in 1979 helped the unpopular dictator Zia ul Haq to strengthen his power. The West was in need of a strong army man who had not to listen to any civil government. During this war from 1979 to 1989 Zia ul Haq got huge support from the West – financially and militarily. From all over the world Islamic fighters were invited to take part in the Jihad against the Communists. During this period of time Zia introduced the Islamic Sharia law and the civil society was oppressed in the worst manner. For the first time in Pakistani history the Mullahs (religious leaders) and religious fundamentalist became influential and powerful – a deathly power which till today they are not willing to give up!

Already under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto religious minorities were political victims. 1974 the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was declared in the Ordinance XX as a Non-Muslim Minority. Ahmadi Muslims were not allowed to call themselves "Muslims". It was forbidden to use Islamic expressions such as "assalamo alaikum" (Islamic greeting) or the call for prayer. Even the expression for "mosque" was not allowed to be used for their place of worship. In 1984 under Zia ul Haq the law worsened (introduction of Art. 289A/B/C and 295, 295A into the Pakistan Penal Code PPC). Now every Ahmadi who calls himself Muslim or express his religious feelings has to be punished with jail of three to ten years and a fine.

1986 the Blasphemy law was introduced by the dictator. This law which was meant against Ahmadis is also used today specifically against Christian minorities and critical citizens who dare to raise their voice against injustice. Anyone who defies the Holy Quran will be punished with life imprisonment (Art. 295B). Anyone who uses derogatory remarks against the Holy Prophet Muhammad will be sentenced to death (Art. 295C).

The changes in legislation relating to religious offences have contributed to an atmosphere of religious intolerance in Pakistan in which violence against members of religious minorities has significantly increased. Often personal conflicts result in a religious accusation with enormous consequences for the accused. Many a time Ahmadis and Christians are killed for no crime and the state is ignoring the criminal offence. In the Pakistani media Ahmadis are declared openly as 'Wajibul Qatl' that is that they ought to be killed.

EGP RESOLUTION :

In the spirit of the principles of United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and international law,

The EGP expresses:

its deep concern about the systematic violation of the rule of law and basic human and democratic rights in Pakistan through Ordinance XX and the Blasphemy law.

The European Green Party urges the European Parliament and the European Commission:

1. To clearly condemn the violation of human rights and fundamental liberties in Pakistan.
2. To urge the State of Pakistan to abolish Ordinance XX and the Blasphemy law.
3. To take, as a matter of the greatest urgency, all the measures necessary to immediately stop the killing of religious minorities in Pakistan.

Summary of Offences Relating to Religion

PPC	Description	Penalty
298A	Use of derogatory remarks etc., in respect of holy personages	Three years' imprisonment, or with fine, or with both
298B	Misuse of epithets, descriptions and titles etc., reserved for certain holy personages or places, by Ahmadis	Three years' imprisonment and fine
298C	An Ahmadi, calling himself a Muslim, or preaching or propagating his faith, or outraging the religious feelings of Muslims, or posing himself as a Muslim	Three years' imprisonment and fine
295	Injuring or defiling places of worship, with intent to insult the religion of any class	Up to two years' imprisonment or with fine, or with both
295A	Deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs	Up to ten years' imprisonment, or with fine, or with both
295B	Defiling, etc., of Holy Quran	Imprisonment for life
295C	Use of derogatory remarks, etc; in respect of the Holy Prophet	Death and fine