

Statement by Pakistan for the UPR of France
15th Session of UPR Working Group
21 January 2013

Mr President,

I would like to thank you _____, Head of Delegation of the Republic of France for presenting the national report.

2. We have taken note of the efforts being made by the Government of France to promote and protection the human rights of its citizens.

Mr. President,

3. Press reports and reports by NGOs indicate that the use of ethnic profiling by law enforcement officials, businesses and government departments in France is a major human rights issue. Data indicates that the French police disproportionately target ethnic and religious minorities for stops, identity check and searches. The legal framework regulating the use of identity checks in France is broad and confers wide discretionary powers on the police leading to discrimination and ethnic profiling. French law does not provide adequate protection against such discrimination and effective remedies for victims.

4. Employment opportunities with businesses and government departments are also seemed to be heavily influenced by racial and religious considerations.

5. The second area of concern is the increasing use of hate speech, stigmatization and xenophobic language in public discourse by politicians and in the media. The Committee of the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has

expressed concerned over discriminatory political speeches and increase in racist and xenophobic acts and manifestations.

6. It has also been documented that hate crime against Muslims and Muslim community like profanation of cemeteries and mosques, physical attacks, insults and provocations etc., is on the increase. This atmosphere is compounded by discriminatory laws including the law on the Hijab/Nikab, which discriminates against Muslim women and violates their freedom of choices.

7. My delegation recommends :

- a. that the Government of France take measures to prevent ethnic profiling by law enforcement officials, government departments and private businesses and provide effective remedies for victims.
- b. That the Government of France demonstrate its political will and take measures to prohibit hate speech, racist and xenophobic act and their manifestation
- c. That the Government of France lift the ban on Hijab and respect the right of Muslim women to express their beliefs.