

*Représentation permanente de la Belgique auprès des Nations Unies et auprès des institutions spécialisées à Genève*

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| **WG UPR – Pakistan**  ***Belgian intervention***  13th November 2017 |

Mr. President,

Belgium welcomes the delegation of Pakistan and wishes it every success in the exercise of its third Universal Periodic Review.

We acknowledge that several positive steps were taken by Pakistan with respect to the implementation of recommendations accepted during its second UPR. However, a number of accepted recommendations have not been fully implemented yet. My delegation is also concerned about certain recent developments in Pakistan, notably the blasphemy laws that provide for the death penalty as a possible punishment.

Therefore, Belgium wishes to formulate the following recommendation:

**R1.** To immediately repeal legislation that provides the possibility to impose the death penalty for freedom of speech-related cases, in particular section 295-C of the Penal Code, in order to ensure compliance with Articles 6 and 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Belgium welcomes the fact that Pakistan will establish a *National Commission on the Rights of Children*. We assume that this commission will play a positive role in enhancing children’s rights in Pakistan. Regarding the rights of children, we recommend to:

**R2.** To set the legal minimum age to marry at 18 years for males and females in all provinces, and ensure that the law is effectively enforced.

**R3.** To adopt legislation that criminalizes domestic violence in all provinces and ensure, promote and facilitate the effective implementation of this legislation, i.a. by providing training for law enforcement officers.

Thank you, Mr. President.