*Check against delivery*

**UPR42 – PAKISTAN**

**Statement by Slovakia**

30 January 2023

Mr. President,

Slovakia takes good note of Government’s efforts to improve human rights situation in the country such as the reinstitution of the **National Commission for Human Rights.** This should be followed by concrete steps to strengthen Commission’s and other human rights institutions’ capacity and resilience.

The situation of **religious minorities** remains worrying. We are alarmed by reports showing an increase of abductions, child and forced marriages and conversions of women and girls. This practice has to stop.

Slovakia offers following recommendations to Pakistan:

1/ To ratify the **Optional Protocol** to the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women**.

2/ To implement measures to ensure respect of the right to freedom of religion or belief, including **protection of religious minorities** and their **places of worship**.

3/ To ensure that the **2023 general elections** will be held in line with the Constitution.

Thank you.