



UN Human Rights Council - 37th session

**Item 6: Oral statement for the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Pakistan**

Madam Vice-President,

FIDH and its member organization, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), express profound sadness at the untimely passing of our colleague and friend Asma Jahangir, a human rights champion who worked tirelessly to protect the rights of all, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups.

With regard to the UPR, FIDH and HRCP regret that the government of Pakistan missed yet another opportunity to show its commitment to address key human rights issues. Despite having accepted nearly 60% of the recommendations it received, it is apparent that the government lacks the political will to address the most serious human rights violations, such as enforced disappearances, the persecution of religious minorities, the use of the death penalty, and extrajudicial killings.

The government's blanket refusal to commit to end the death penalty, including for juveniles and for offenses that do not meet the threshold of the 'most serious crimes', is particularly disappointing because this practice is in clear violation of Pakistan's international human rights obligations.

Freedom of expression continues to be silenced through the harassment, arbitrary detention, torture, and enforced disappearance of voices critical of the government or Islam. In this context, it is concerning that the government did not accept any of the recommendations that called for the repeal or amendment of blasphemy laws.

We are also disappointed by the government's failure to accept all recommendations that are meant to protect persons from violence and discrimination on the basis of their sexual orientation and gender identity.

We welcome the government's positive response to over 30 recommendations that called for the protection of women's rights and the adoption of measures aimed at preventing discrimination and violence against women and ensuring punishment for all perpetrators of violence against them. We sincerely hope the authorities will translate this commitment into action.

FIDH and HRCP further urge the Pakistani government to immediately begin the implementation of the recommendations that it did not accept and that are consistent with its obligations under human rights treaties to which Pakistan is a state party.