

November 8, 2014

His Excellency Nawaz Sharif
Prime Minister
Islamic Republic of Pakistan
Islamabad, Pakistan

Honorable Prime Minister:

As the International Panel of Parliamentarians for Freedom of Religion or Belief meeting in Oslo, we write today collectively to express our deep concerns about the religious freedom situation in Pakistan. We come from a variety of countries with different parliamentary systems in various regions, but we are alarmed by ongoing reports of violations of this fundamental freedom, especially for religious minorities. We respectfully ask you to work to ensure that all individuals in your country, be they Muslim or non-Muslim, can fully enjoy freedom of religion or belief without fear of violence or discrimination.

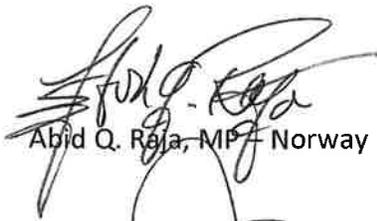
Recent reports of individuals killed for allegations of blasphemy are profoundly disturbing. We were shocked by the murder of two Christians, Shahbaz Masih and his pregnant wife Shama Bibi, at the hands of a mob near Lahore in Punjab province. That horrible situation was followed days later with another blasphemy related murder in Punjab, this time a policeman killing with an axe Shi'a Muslim Syed Tufail Hyder for "blasphemous statements" made while the individual was in jail.

We ask that you intervene to see that these attacks, and other incidents of violence against Shi'as, Ahmadis, Hindus, Parsis and other religious minorities, are fully investigated and vigorously prosecuted. Also take steps to ensure the justices overseeing the cases are protected. If there are no consequences for killing individuals, then a climate of impunity will grow that threatens all Pakistanis – Muslim and non-Muslim alike. Previous attacks on minorities have generally not resulted in individuals being sentenced to jail. We respectfully request that you personally take steps to see that justice is done in the three murders occurring this month, as well as to work with the Chief Minister of Punjab province as most blasphemy-related cases originate there.

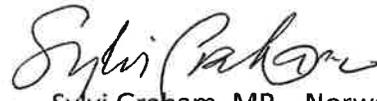
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Mr. Prime Minister, Pakistan has a proud history of religious diversity. We are signing in our personal capacity and not for our government, and we will continue to closely observe the situation. We hope you will redouble your efforts to protect Pakistan's religious heritage.

Sincerely,



Abid Q. Raja, MP – Norway



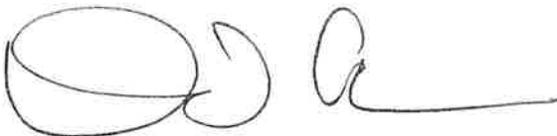
Sylvi Graham, MP – Norway



Roberto Alves de Lucena, MP – Brazil



Gerardo Amarilla, MP – Uruguay



David Anderson, MP – Canada



Marina Berlinghieri, MP – Italy



Baroness Berridge of the Vale of Catmose – Great Britain



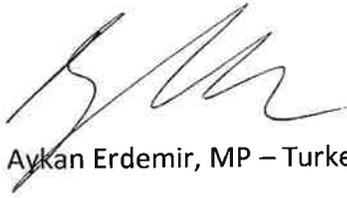
Eugenio Cedeño, MP – Dominican Republic



Lokmani Dhakal, MP – Nepal



Cheryllyn Dudley, MP – South Africa



Aykan Erdemir, MP – Turkey



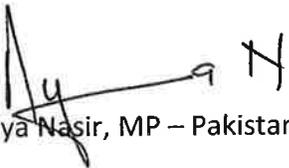
Graciela Fermin Nuesi, MP –
Dominican Republic



Heribert Hirte, MP – Germany



Shwe Maung, MP (aka Abdul Razak)
– Myanmar



Asiya Nasir, MP – Pakistan



Senator Liliana Negre de Alonso –
Argentina



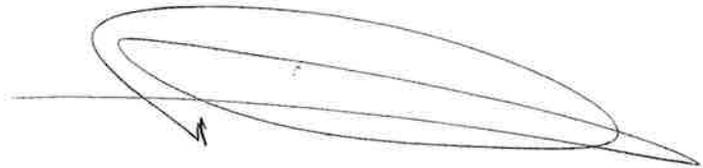
Kasthuri Patto, MP – Malaysia



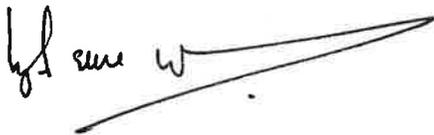
Ernesto Preziosi, MP – Italy



Leonardo Quintao, MP – Brazil



Mario Redondo, MP – Costa Rica



Vasantha Senanayake, MP – Sri Lanka