



# HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL ELECTIONS

## 2021 CANDIDATE

## PAKISTAN

**Status** - Seeking Election

**Previous Terms** - 2006-08, 2009-11, 2013-15, 2018-20

### **Key measures Pakistan should commit to implement as a Council member**

The following measures were developed by the International Service for Human Rights.

#### **Human rights defenders and civic space:**

- Address impunity for human rights violations against human rights defenders and journalists, including by ensuring independent inquiries and investigations into all allegations and reports of attacks against them. Ensure that perpetrators of such attacks – both State and non-State actors – are identified, and are brought to justice.
- Immediately release from prison or house arrest any political activists, journalists and other civil society actors who have been convicted for peacefully expressing their opinions.
- Review the procedure for non-governmental organizations to obtain foreign funding and ensure that they can freely carry out their advocacy work. The current procedure for nongovernmental organizations to obtain foreign funding lacks transparency and is cumbersome and applied in a discriminatory manner.
- End the misuse of anti-terror legislation to persecute those engaging in peaceful political and civil activities and expressions of dissent, and amend the Anti-Terrorism Act to bring it in line with international human rights standards, including by incorporating human rights safeguards.
- Review and reform the national legislative framework to ensure that rights related to the freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association – both online and offline – are guaranteed without discrimination. In particular, decriminalise blasphemy, and ensure that laws on counter-terrorism, defamation and sedition are not selectively applied with the view to stifle dissent.

#### **Enforced disappearance**

- Make enforced disappearance a criminal offence and ensure that all allegations of enforced disappearance and extrajudicial executions are thoroughly investigated and those responsible brought to justice.
- Criminalize enforced disappearances in the penal code and reinforce the capacities of the Pakistanis Inquiry Commission on Enforced Disappearances as Pakistan had accepted in its UPR in 2013
- Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and adapt its national legislation to international standards in this regard.

## **Non-discrimination & equality**

- Ensure that the National Commission on the Status of Women as well as the provincial commissions have adequate human, technical and financial resources in order to better protect and promote the rights of women.
- Ratify the optional protocol to CEDAW.

## **NHRI**

- Enhance the independence and effectiveness of the National Commission for Human Rights through provision of adequate human and financial resources and ensure its independence in accordance with the Paris Principles.
- Strengthen the mandate of the Commission and enable it to investigate complaints about violations against human rights defenders, including through the creation of a focal point for the protection of HRDs.

## **Cooperation with UN bodies**

- Address and implement the recommendations made by the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights, particularly by supporting a comprehensive independent international investigation into allegations of human rights violations in Kashmir.
- Ensure unfettered access for the High Commissioner and her staff into Pakistan-administered Kashmir.