



Home Office

Pakistan

Country of Origin Information (COI) Report

COI Service

9 August 2013

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Reports on Pakistan published or accessed between 20 July and 8 August 2013

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Preface

- i This Country of Origin Information (COI) report has been produced by the COI Service, Home Office, for use by officials involved in the asylum/human rights determination process. The report provides general background information about the issues most commonly raised in asylum/human rights claims made in the United Kingdom. The main body of the report includes information available up to 19 July 2013. The report was issued on 9 August 2013.
- ii The report is compiled wholly from material produced by a wide range of external information sources and does not contain any Home Office opinion or policy. All information in the Report is attributed, throughout the text, to the original source material, which is made available to those working in the asylum/human rights determination process.
- iii The report aims to provide a compilation of extracts from the source material identified, focusing on the main issues raised in asylum and human rights applications. In some sections where the topics covered arise infrequently in asylum/human rights claims only web links may be provided. It is not intended to be a detailed or comprehensive survey. For a more detailed account, the relevant source documents should be examined directly.
- iv The structure and format of the report reflects the way it is used by Home Office decision makers and appeals presenting officers, who require quick electronic access to information on specific issues and use the contents page to go directly to the subject required. Key issues are usually covered in some depth within a dedicated section, but may also be referred to briefly in several other sections. Some repetition is therefore inherent in the structure of the Report.
- v The information included in this report is limited to that which can be identified from source documents. While every effort is made to cover all relevant aspects of a particular topic it is not always possible to obtain the information concerned. For this reason, it is important to note that information included in the report should not be taken to imply anything beyond what is actually stated. For example, if it is stated that a particular law has been passed, this should not be taken to imply that it has been effectively implemented unless stated. Similarly, the absence of information does not necessarily mean that, for example, a particular event or action did not occur.
- vi As noted above, the report is a compilation of extracts produced by a number of information sources. In compiling the report no attempt has been made to resolve discrepancies between information provided in different source documents though COI Service will bring the discrepancies together and aim to provide a range of sources, where available, to ensure that a balanced picture is presented. For example, different source documents often contain different versions of names and spellings of individuals, places and political parties, etc. Reports do not aim to bring consistency of spelling but to reflect faithfully the spellings used in the original source documents. Similarly, figures given in different source documents sometimes vary and these are simply quoted as per the original text. The term 'sic' has been used in this document only to denote incorrect spellings or typographical errors in quoted text; its use is not intended to imply any comment on the content of the material.

- vii The report is based substantially upon source documents issued during the previous two years. However, some older source documents may have been included because they contain relevant information not available in more recent documents. All sources contain information considered relevant at the time this Report was issued.
- viii This report and the accompanying source material are public documents. All reports are published on the Home Office website and the great majority of the source material for the report is readily available in the public domain. Where the source documents identified are available in electronic form, the relevant weblink has been included, together with the date that the link was accessed. Copies of less accessible source documents, such as those provided by government offices or subscription services, are available from COI Service upon request.
- ix Reports are published regularly on the top 20 asylum intake countries. Reports on countries outside the top 20 countries may also be produced if there is a particular operational need. UKBA officials also have constant access to an information request service for specific enquiries.
- x In producing this report, COI Service has sought to provide an accurate, up to date, balanced and impartial compilation of extracts of the available source material. Any comments regarding this report or suggestions for additional source material are very welcome and should be submitted to COI Service as below.

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Independent Advisory Group on Country Information

- xi The Independent Advisory Group on Country Information (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to make recommendations to him about the content of the Home Office's COI material. The IAGCI welcomes feedback on UKBA's COI Reports and other COI material. Information about the IAGCI's work can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector's website at <http://icinspector.independent.gov.uk/country-information-reviews/>
- xii In the course of its work the IAGCI reviews the content of selected Home Office COI documents and makes recommendations specific to those documents and of a more general nature. A list of the Reports and other documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI or the Advisory Panel on Country Information (the independent organisation which monitored Home Office's COI material from September 2003 to October 2008) is available at <http://icinspector.independent.gov.uk/country-information-reviews/>
- xiii Please note: it is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any Home Office material or procedures. Some of the material examined by the Group relates to countries designated or proposed for designation to the Non-Suspensive Appeals (NSA) list. In such cases, the Group's work should not be taken to imply any endorsement of the

decision or proposal to designate a particular country for NSA, nor of the NSA process itself. The IAGCI can be contacted at:

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The Home Office is not responsible for the content of external websites.

Médecins Sans Frontières

International Activity Report 2012, 16 July 2013

http://www.msf.org/sites/msf.org/files/msf_activity_report_2012_interactive_100.pdf

Date accessed 31 July 2013

Useful news sources for further information

A list of news sources with Weblinks is provided below, which may be useful if additional up to date information is required to supplement that provided in this report. The full list of sources used in this report can be found in [Annex G – References to source material](#). An alphabetical list can be found in [Annex H – References to source material – alphabetical](#).

AlertNet (Thomson Reuters) <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/index.htm?news=all>

British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) <http://news.bbc.co.uk>

Cable News Network (CNN) <http://edition.cnn.com/WORLD/?fbid=i0gUtrVnUAY>

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) <http://www.irinnews.org/>

International Crisis Group <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/asia/south-asia/pakistan.aspx>

Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) <http://san-pips.com/>

South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) <http://www.satp.org/>

UNHCR Refworld – Pakistan <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country/PAK.html>

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Background Information

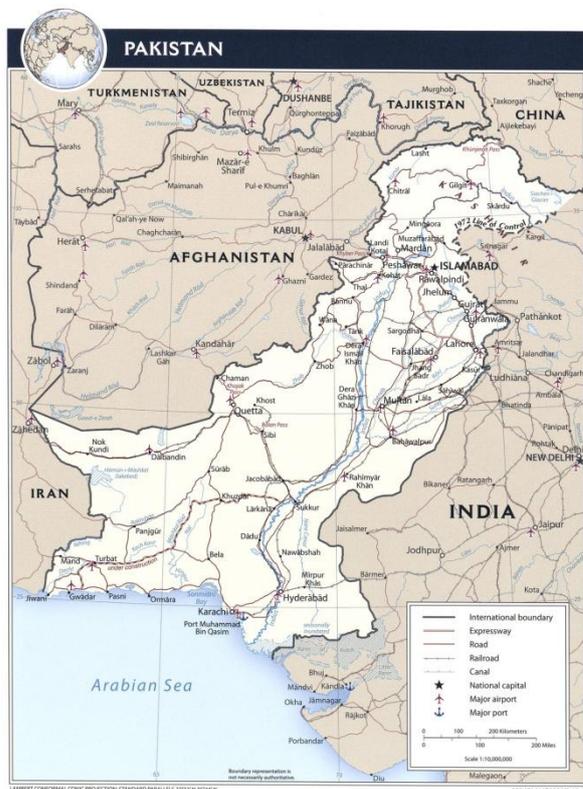
1. Geography

- 1.01 The CIA World Factbook, noted in its profile on Pakistan, updated 16 April 2013, accessed 1 May 2013, that Pakistan was located in South Asia, bordering the Arabian Sea, and between India on the east, Iran and Afghanistan on the west, and China to the north. The country covered 796,095 square kilometres. **[4a] (Geography)**
- 1.02 Pakistan (official name – Islamic Republic of Pakistan) is divided into four provinces – Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) (formerly known as North West Frontier Province or NWFP) – (US Department of State (USSD) Background Note: Pakistan, 6 October 2010) **[3a] (Government)** and two territories – the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and the Islamabad Capital Territory. (CIA World Factbook, Pakistan, 16 April 2013, accessed 1 May 2013) **[4a] (Government)** The FATA is composed of seven tribal agencies: Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Kurram, Orakzai, North Waziristan, and South Waziristan. (USSD Background Note: Pakistan, 6 October 2010) **[3a] (Government)** The CIA World Factbook added that ‘... the Pakistani-administered portion of the disputed Jammu and Kashmir region consists of two administrative entities: Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.’ **[4a] (Government)**
- 1.03 Pakistan’s population was estimated to be 187,342,721 (male: 96,234,516; female: 91,108,205) as of July 2011. (CIA World Factbook, Pakistan, 16 April 2013, accessed 1 May 2013) **[4a] (People)** Pakistan’s principal cities (estimated population in brackets) are the capital, Islamabad (800,000) and Rawalpindi (1,406,214), which comprises the national capital area with a combined population of 3.7 million. Other major cities include Karachi (11,624,219), Lahore (6,310,888), Faisalabad (1,977,246) and Hyderabad (1,151,274). (USSD Background Note: Pakistan, 6 October 2010) **[3a] (Geography)**
- 1.04 As noted in the CIA World Factbook, updated 16 April 2013, accessed 1 May 2013, the main ethnic groups of Pakistan comprised of ‘Punjabi 44.68%, Pashtun (Pathan) 15.42%, Sindhi 14.1%, Sariaiki 8.38%, Muhajirs [Mohajirs] 7.57%, Balochi 3.57%, other 6.28%.’ **[4a] (People)** According to the 1998 census, 95 per cent of Pakistan’s population was Muslim, the majority being Sunni with Shi’a minority of approximately 25 per cent. Though prohibited by law to call themselves Muslims, Ahmadis generally chose not to identify themselves as non-Muslims. Hindus, Christians, Parsis/Zoroastrians, Bahais, Sikhs, Buddhists and others comprise a further five per cent. (International Religious Freedom Report for 2012, 20 May 2013) **[3k] (Section I)**
- 1.05 The Constitution of Pakistan of 1973 states:
- ‘(1) The National language of Pakistan is Urdu, and arrangements shall be made for its being used for official and other purposes within fifteen years from the commencing day.
- ‘(2) Subject to clause (1), the English language may be used for official purposes until arrangements are made for its replacement by Urdu.
- ‘(3) Without prejudice to the status of the National language, a Provincial Assembly may by law prescribe measures for the teaching, promotion and use of a Provincial language in addition to the National language.’ **[29n] (Part XII: Chapter 4, Article 251)**

- 1.06 The CIA World Factbook, updated 16 April 2013, accessed 1 May 2013, stated that the main languages of Pakistan were 'Punjabi 48%, Sindhi 12%, Siraiki (a Punjabi variant) 10%, Pashtu 8%, Urdu (official) 8%, Balochi 3%, Hindko 2%, Brahui 1%, English (official; lingua franca of Pakistani elite and most government ministries), Burushaski, and other 8%.' **[4a] (People)** Ethnologue's Languages of the World, Sixteenth edition, published in 2009, stated: 'The number of individual languages listed for Pakistan is 72. All are living languages.' **[15] (Languages of Pakistan)**
- 1.07 Regarding languages in Pakistan, Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment noted in its section on Demography, updated 11 October 2012, that 'Of Pakistan's 20 spoken languages, Punjabi, Sindhi, Urdu, Pashto and Balochi are Indo-Aryan in origin. These vernaculars extend across the northern Indian subcontinent, manifesting themselves in a number of local dialects. Pakistan's official language, Urdu, is spoken as a native tongue by just eight per cent of the population, the majority of whom are Mohajirs, but along with English is a common working language.' **[1a] (Demography: Language)**
- 1.08 The Independent Advisory Group on Country Information (IAGCI) Evaluation of the Country of Origin Information (COI) Report on Pakistan, by Professor Shaun Gregory, of the Pakistan Security Research Unit, University of Bradford, dated 26 April 2011, stated that although eight per cent of Pakistanis have Urdu as their first language, an estimated 80 to 90 per cent use Urdu as their second functional language making it a virtual lingua franca. **[126a]**

Map

- 1.09 Map of Pakistan, dated 2010, extracted from the University of Texas at Austin, Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection (click on map for full access).



[82a]

Telecommunications

- 1.10 The International Organization for Migration (IOM) noted in its Returning to Pakistan Country Information fact sheet, updated 4 January 2010, that:
- ‘The telecommunications industry is growing in Pakistan. Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) is Pakistan’s most reliable and largest converged service carrier, providing consumers and businesses all over the country with all telecommunication services, from basic voice telephony to data, Internet, video-conferencing and carrier services. Mobile phone companies have not only increased in number but they have also expanded their operations to the remotest parts of the country, offering an excellent service to their clients.’ **[85a] (p24)**
- 1.11 The same source listed the mobile phone companies operating in Pakistan, which included Mobilink, Ufone, Warid Telecom, Telenor Pakistan and Zong. **[85a] (p25)**
- 1.12 With regards to the internet, the IOM fact sheet stated ‘The Internet is available in all the major cities of the country, as well as in many remote areas. The majority of people use dial-up connections.’ **[85a] (p24)**

Public holidays

- 1.13 The Economist Intelligence Unit’s Country Report for Pakistan, dated 12 April 2013, listed Pakistan’s static public holidays as 23 March (Pakistan Day); 1 May (Labour Day); 14 August (Independence Day); 25 December (birth of Quaid-i-Azam). The report cited the moveable public holidays as Ashura, Eid-i-Milad-un-Nabi, Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha which were dependent on the Islamic lunar calendar, therefore their dates varied from year to year. **[2c] (Basic data: Public holidays)**
- 1.14 The Government of Pakistan’s Ministry of Minorities website, accessed 20 May 2013, officially declared the 11 August as ‘Minorities Day’. **[29q]**

See also [Ethnic groups](#) and [Freedom of religion](#)

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2. Economy

- 2.01 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) noted in its annual report, ‘State of Human Rights in 2011’ (HRCP Report 2011), published March 2012, that ‘A working paper by the National Accounts Committee, an official body, illustrated that in the aftermath of severe floods and debilitating load shedding, Pakistan’s Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) declined to 2.39 percent in 2010-2011 against the target of 4.5 percent. The largest decline in GDP was due to lack of electricity, gas and water supply.’ **(p207)** The report added that as many as 36 million Pakistani’s lived below the poverty line. **[27g] (p192)**

See also [Humanitarian issues](#)

- 2.02 The US Department of State (USSD) Background Note: Pakistan, dated 6 October 2010, reported that ‘Agriculture accounts for about 21% of GDP and employs about 42% of the labor force. The most important crops are cotton, wheat, rice, sugarcane,

fruits, and vegetables, which together account for more than 75% of the value of total crop output. Despite intensive farming practices, Pakistan remains a net food importer. Pakistan exports rice, fish, fruits, and vegetables and imports vegetable oil, wheat, cotton (net importer), pulses, and consumer foods.' **[3a] (Agriculture and natural resources)**

2.03 The HRCP Report 2011 noted with regards to employment that:

'According to the official Labour Force Survey (LFS) for 2011, the total workforce in the country stood at 57.3 million out of which 51.9 million were stated to be employed... The number of unemployed women was stated to have decreased to 1.18 million from 1.21 million.' **(p189)** The LFS '...concluded that unemployment in the country rose to 6 percent of the total workforce from 5.6 percent in 2009-10. That meant that the total number of unemployed rose by 280,000 people during 2011. However, contrary to the official survey the Chief Economist for the Planning Commission claimed that the rate of unemployment actually stood at 35 percent of the total workforce in 2011.' **[27g] (p191)**

2.04 The same source noted 'Protests were observed all over the country throughout the year demanding [the] minimum wage to be substantially increased from the prevailing Rs. 7,000 per month. The minimum wage remained unchanged at the end of 2011 and there were numerous reports where even that meagre amount was not paid to the workers.' The report added that non-payment of salaries, pensions, and delays in payment, continued in 2011. **[27g] (p202)**

See also [Employment rights](#)

2.05 As at 27 June 2013, 1 US Dollar = 99.98871 Pakistan Rupee and 1 British Pound = 154.795 Pakistan Rupee. ([Oanda](#), accessed 27 June 2013) **[96a]**

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3. History

For an overview of Pakistan's recent history see the Freedom House report, [Freedom in the World: Pakistan](#) and the BBC's [Pakistan Profile](#), which includes a timeline of events.

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4. Recent developments: May to July 2013

4.01 On 30 July 2013, Manmoon Hussain, of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz (PML-N), was elected as the president to replace Asif Ali Zardari. He will take office in September 2013. **[35n]**

Please note that the above paragraph post-dates the narrative cut-off date of 19 July 2013 to include the presidential elections held on 30 July 2013.

4.02 On 15 July 2013 the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) expressed its concern at the steep rise in killings in Karachi during the first six months of 2013. The statistics, based on newspaper reports, cited the deaths of 1,726 people killed in

sectarian violence, targeted killings and other incidences of violence. During the same period in 2012, 1,215 violent deaths were recorded. **[27i]**

See also Security situation: [Sectarian violence](#) and Political affiliation: [Politically motivated violence](#)

4.03 Amnesty International reported on 3 July 2013 that:

‘Media reports in Pakistan over the past few days have suggested that the new government, led by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, may be moving rapidly to resume state killings in response to the prevailing law and order situation in the country... A presidential order imposing a moratorium on the death penalty, issued in 2008, expired on 30 June [2013]. According to media reports the government has no intention of extending the order. Instead, it is implementing a new policy to execute all death row prisoners [more than 8,000] except those whose mercy petitions have “reasons to be considered”.’ **[13n]**

See also section: [Death penalty](#)

4.04 The Foreign and Commonwealth Office noted in its quarterly update for Pakistan, dated 31 March 2013, that:

‘The start of 2013 has seen a number of terrorist attacks targeting Pakistan’s Shia Muslims. On 10 January and 16 February the Hazara community in Quetta was targeted by bombings which killed over 200 people. On 3 March a bomb was detonated outside a Shia mosque in Karachi, killing at least 48 people... On 9 March allegations of blasphemy were made against a member of the Christian community in Joseph Colony in Lahore which led to violent anti-Christian riots. A mob of several thousand destroyed over 150 homes and other property.’ **[11b]**

Elections 2013

4.05 Pakistan’s national and provincial elections, held on 11 May 2013, marked the country’s first transition from one civilian government to another in its 66-year history. (BBC News, 11 May 2013) **[35j]** Nawaz Sharif of the Pakistani Muslim League (PML-N) won the general elections, winning 244 votes, so becoming Prime Minister for the third time. (Dawn, 5 June 2013) **[42f]** The [Election Commission of Pakistan](#) website, accessed 2 July 2013, provided a breakdown of results in the national and provincial assemblies. **[142a]**

4.06 The Report of the Commonwealth Observer Mission on the Pakistan General Elections, 11 May 2013, published 20 June 2013, noted:

‘Pakistani voters turned out in very large numbers on 11 May 2013 to cast their ballots and express their will to elect their Provincial and National representatives. The elections were credible and represent notable progress for Pakistan towards holding fully democratic elections.

‘The positive features of the 2013 elections included: an improved legal framework; a higher level of confidence in the ECP at the national level; a significantly improved voter registration process; election day procedures which in most instances were well managed, with the notable exception of parts of Karachi; and a very high turnout of the electorate to cast their votes.

‘Of particular concern were: the level of violence in some parts of the country, which impacted on the democratic process; the handling of candidate nominations; the low level of women’s participation as voters and candidates, despite some improvements in this regard; and, the need to further improve mechanisms to ensure compliance with the Codes of Conduct...’ **[70a] (p25-26)**

4.07 On 21 May 2013, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) reported on the elections, stating that:

‘The election has shaken the civilian political landscape. One of the two traditional parties, in fact the one with support across provinces, was resoundingly thrashed, even humiliated. The Pakistan People’s Party headed by the Bhutto family for over 50 years was deeply wounded by its historic opponent, the eponymous Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz headed by Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and his brother, Shahbaz Sharif, the chief minister of Punjab. Unlike its opponents which were tied almost entirely to a single province, the PPP had arguably been the dominant party in Pakistan with support in all four provinces. Now it is left with seats only in its home province of Sindh and two seats in Punjab while the PML-N is the party with seats in all four provinces. The election has left the PPP with around 30 seats out of 272 in the National Assembly against 130-140 for PML-N and 30 (an equal number to the PPP) for the upstart PTI of Imran Khan, which had before won only a single seat and will now form the government in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) Province. Few observers predicted the PML-N dominance, let alone the PPP collapse. Most thought that Nawaz would probably receive the plurality of seats in the Assembly but not that many more than the PPP and therefore that the PPP or PML-N would be the largest but not the predominant party in a ruling and probably unruly coalition. Not anymore.

‘The political landscape of Pakistan is now less predictable than ever before. The Karachi-based and Muhajir-centered Mutahidda Qaumi Movement, long a majority-contributing coalition partner of the PPP was reduced in Sindh. The relatively moderate Awami National Party, based in K-P (and more recently also in Karachi) has been virtually wiped out with only one seat left in K-P. Both the PPP and the PLM-N have suffered defeats and victories in the past but they have been relatively more moderate than in this election. The PML-N will be the core party in the governance of Punjab, the PTI will be the same in K-P, and the PPP will be reduced to Sindh. There will be no cross-provincial party with substantial seats in three of the provinces.’ **[148a]**

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Election violence

4.08 With regards to election violence, the report added:

‘... this election was affected by a significant level of violence, which impacted most dramatically in the city of Karachi and Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Provinces. While the violence in Karachi included inter-party violence, the bulk of the violence during the elections emanated from militant groups external to the elections. According to reports three candidates were killed in targeted attacks, with well over a hundred party supporters killed and several hundreds injured.’ **[70a] (p25-26)**

4.09 On 8 May 2013, the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) reported on the escalating violence ahead of the 11 May elections, stating that the attacks ‘disproportionately targeted incumbents and secular parties.’ The report added:

‘At least three candidates and over 125 party workers, supporters and bystanders have been killed in more than 50 separate election-related attacks in the past month. Geographically, the violence has been concentrated in the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, as well as in Pakistan’s largest city, Karachi... Although no high-profile leaders have been targeted this year, a senior leader of the Awami National Party (ANP), Bashir Ahmed Bilour, was assassinated in Peshawar in December 2012.

‘Although several low-level attacks appear to be the result of rivalries between candidates, large-scale bombings – which are thought to be the work of insurgents – have also occurred. The Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP, also known as the Pakistani Taliban) has issued multiple statements denouncing the democratic process as inherently “un-Islamic”. Insurgents belonging to the group have specifically targeted leaders of “secular, apostate” parties, namely the PPP, the ANP and the Karachi-based Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM).’ [2g]

4.10 On the day of the elections, 11 May 2013, BBC News reported on sporadic violence across the country, including:

- ‘Seven people were hurt outside a polling station in the north-western city of Peshawar when a bomb went off attached to a motorcycle
- A suicide bomber blew himself up after police prevented him from entering another polling station in Peshawar, police told AFP [Agence France Presse]
- A clash between two groups at a polling station in Chaman on the border with Afghanistan left least three people dead and several others hurt
- An explosion was also reported in Quetta in the south-west
- At least four people were hurt in a blast in Mardan in the north-west.’ [35j]

4.11 The Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), an independent think-tank, provided an overview of election-related violence, in its report ‘[Elections 2013: Violence against Political Parties, Candidates and Voters](#)’, dated May 2013. [100b]

See also Freedom of religion: [Blasphemy laws](#) and [Christians](#)

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5. Constitution

5.01 For its full text plus recent amendments see [The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan](#). [29n]

5.02 Europa World Online, undated, accessed 26 July 2011, noted that ‘The Constitution was promulgated on 10 April 1973, and amended on a number of subsequent occasions... [6] (**Constitution and Government**) The Preamble upholds the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice as enunciated by Islam. The rights of religious and other minorities are guaranteed... Fundamental rights are guaranteed and include equality of status (women have equal rights with men), freedom

of thought, speech, worship and the press and freedom of assembly and association...
(The Constitution of Pakistan) **[29n]**

5.03 Europa World Online also noted:

'In April 2010 a number of far-reaching constitutional reforms (the Eighteenth Amendment Bill), ceding key presidential powers to the Prime Minister and legislature, were signed into law, following unanimous approval by the National Assembly and Senate earlier that month. The main components of the amendments, which effectively terminated the Seventeenth Amendment enacted by President Musharraf in December 2003 (including the LFO) and transformed the president into a largely titular head of state, were: the divestment of the presidential mandate to dismiss elected governments and to appoint military chiefs and the transferral of these powers to the prime minister; the appointment of judges was transferred from the president to a judicial commission headed by the Chief Justice (with nominations to be approved by a parliamentary committee); the chief election commissioner was no longer to be appointed by the president; the election of the prime minister and of provincial chief ministers was no longer to be conducted by secret ballot; the president no longer had the power unilaterally to impose emergency rule in a province; the two-term limit on the holding of the premiership was lifted (thus allowing for Nawaz Sharif potentially to stand for another term as prime minister); and the NWFP was renamed Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa (a long-standing demand of the ethnic Pashtuns who dominate that region).' **[6] (Country profile: Contemporary Political history; Domestic Political Affairs)**

5.04 The US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) stated in its Annual Report 2012, covering events from April 2011 to February 2012, published March 2012, that '...the 18th amendment specifically stipulated that the prime minister must be a Muslim and did not address the constitution's anti-Ahmadi provisions.' **[53c] (p122)**

5.05 The text of the [Eighteenth Amendment Bill](#) was published on the Council on Foreign Relations website, on 19 April 2010. **[90]**

5.06 The Freedom House report Freedom in the World 2013 – Pakistan, published 10 June 2013, noted 'Provisions of the 18th Amendment granted power over judicial appointments to a judicial commission rather than the president, and the 19th Amendment further strengthened the role of the chief justice and other senior judges in the commission and appointments process.' **[5a]**

5.07 The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) noted in its report, The State of Human Rights in Pakistan in 2011 (AHRC Report 2011), published 10 December 2011, that 'Through the [18th] amendment the powers of the federal government were devolved to the provinces but after the passage of more than 18 months the process of devolution were stopped [for] unseen reasons.' **[52g] (p6)**

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6. Political system

6.01 The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) noted in its 2012 Human Rights and Democracy Report, published 15 April 2013, that the Federal and Provincial elections in May 2013 was '... the first time in Pakistan that a civilian government has completed its full term and democratically transferred power to another.' **[11e] (Elections)**

6.02 The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) noted in its report, *The State of Human Rights in Pakistan in 2011* (AHRC Report 2011), published 10 December 2011, that:

‘Pakistani society and the government remain under the strong hold of the military which does not allow them to interfere in the affairs of the armed forces. Pakistan remains a highly militarized society where economic, political, foreign affairs and judicial policies are dictated by the military. The laws for the benefits of women, religious minorities and against the torture and enforced disappearances cannot be made without the prior approval from the military. The parliament has been made redundant and the decisions of the parliament are occasionally reverted through the judiciary on the behest of the military.’ **[52g] (p2)**

6.03 The International Crisis Group (ICG) stated in its report [Reforming Pakistan’s Electoral System](#), dated 30 March 2011, that:

‘Electoral rigging has hampered Pakistan’s democratic development, eroded political stability and contributed to the breakdown of the rule of law. Facing domestic pressure for democracy, successive military governments rigged national, provincial and local polls to ensure regime survival. These elections yielded unrepresentative parliaments that have rubber-stamped extensive constitutional and political reforms to centralise power with the military and to empower its civilian allies. Undemocratic rule has also suppressed other civilian institutions, including the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), which is responsible for holding elections to the national and four provincial assemblies, and local governments. With the next general election in 2013 – if the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP)-led government completes its full five-year term – the ruling party and its parliamentary opposition, as well as the international community, should focus on ensuring a transparent, orderly political transition through free, fair and transparent elections.’ **[20c] (Executive summary and recommendations)**

6.04 The ICG report added that, despite reforms under the eighteenth amendment to the constitution, further changes were needed:

‘To curtail opportunities for the military to manipulate the political process, the ECP must be made independent, impartial and effective. The commission remains poorly managed, inadequately resourced, under-staffed and under-trained... Highly inaccurate voters lists are responsible for disenfranchising millions. Polling procedures are often manipulated; accountability mechanisms for candidates and political parties seldom employed; and the electoral code of conduct routinely flouted... Many discriminatory laws remain in place, including easily manipulated qualification criteria requiring electoral candidates to be of good Islamic character. Moreover, an interventionist military high command appears bent on shaping the political order to its liking... In the past, both the PML-N and the PPP have instead chosen to collude with the military at times.’ **[20c] (Executive summary and recommendations)**

Federal legislature

6.05 Europa World online, undated, accessed 26 July 2011, noted that:

‘The President is a constitutional Head of State, who is normally elected for five years by an electoral college, comprising the Federal Legislature and the four provincial assemblies. The former consists of a lower and upper house – the National Assembly and Senate. There are 342 seats in the National Assembly, with 272 members directly elected (on the basis of adult suffrage), 60 seats reserved for women and 10 for non-

Muslims. The term of the National Assembly is five years. The Senate comprises 104 seats; the provincial assemblies directly elect 92 members – of whom four have to be non-Muslims, 16 have to be women and a further 16 technocrats (including ulema , Muslim legal scholars) – and of the remaining 12 members, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas return eight members and the remaining four are elected from the Federal Capital Territory by members of the Provincial Assemblies. The term of the Senate is six years, with one-half of the membership being renewed every three years. The Prime Minister is elected by the National Assembly and he/she and the other ministers in the Cabinet are responsible to it.’ **[6] (Country profile: Constitution and Government)**

6.06 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its annual report, ‘State of Human Rights in 2011’ (HRCP Report 2011), published March 2012, that:

‘Rather than being directly elected, members of religious minorities were nominated to parliament by political parties’ heads. The [HRCP] working group said that parliamentarians nominated in this manner often sought to please the party head rather than serving the minority community, which the parliamentarians did not deem their electorate... four senators from the minority communities were to be elected to the Senate in early 2012... reserved for them under the 18th Amendment.’ **[27g] (p142-143)**

6.07 In its country report for Pakistan, dated 15 March 2012, the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) reported on the elections held for nearly one half of the Senate (upper house of parliament), which were held in March 2012. The EIU stated:

‘The Pakistan People’s Party (PPP), which heads the governing coalition, won 19 of the 45 Senate seats being contested in the March [2012] elections, increasing its majority to 41 members. The PPP along with its allies – the Awami National Party (with 12 seats), the Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-i-Azam), which holds five seats, and the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (six seats) – now hold a comfortable majority in the Senate.’ **[2b] (Political scene: The PPP emerges victorious following Senate elections)**

6.08 The terms of the Constitution state ‘The President.-(1) There shall be a President of Pakistan who shall be the Head of State and shall represent the unity of the Republic. (2) A person shall not be qualified for election as President unless he is a Muslim of not less than forty-five years of age and is qualified to be elected as member of the National Assembly.’ **[29n]** The US Department of State’s International Religious Freedom Report for 2012 (USSD IRF Report 2012), published 20 May 2013, noted ‘All senior officials, including members of Parliament, must swear an oath to protect the country’s Islamic identity.’ **[3k] (Section II: Legal/Policy Framework)**

Provincial governments

6.09 The USSD Background Note: Pakistan, dated 6 October 2010, stated that ‘Each of the four provinces – Punjab, Sindh, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa [formerly North West Frontier Province] and Balochistan – has a chief minister and a provincial assembly. The Northern Areas [Gilgit-Baltistan], Azad Kashmir, and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) are administered by the federal government but enjoy considerable autonomy. The cabinet, National Security Council, and governors serve at the president’s discretion.’ **[3a] (Government and political organization)**

6.10 The UN Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), ‘National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21* Pakistan’, dated 6 August 2012, stated:

'The 18th Amendment has given more financial and administrative autonomy to the provinces and transferred subjects of health, education, housing, social welfare, women development, water and sanitation to the provinces. It has further strengthened the human rights guaranteed under the Constitution. The Right to Education (Article 25A), Right to Information (Article 19A) and Right to Fair Trial (Article 10A) have been established as fundamental rights which cannot be suspended.' [83b] (paragraph 9)

6.11 The International Crisis Group (ICG) reported on 12 August 2011, that, on that date:

'...Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari signed the extension of the Political Party Order (2002) to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), fulfilling one of his government's key pledges related to the militancy-ridden tribal belt... This move will allow political parties to operate legally in FATA for the first time... Now, as proper members of mainstream political parties, FATA's legislators will represent and be subject to party policy, and able to campaign on party platforms in the next election. Political party recruitment and activism, even in a controlled environment, will also help broaden participation beyond a relatively small tribal elite of maliks (tribal elders), and fill a political vacuum that militants, smugglers and other criminals, big and small, have exploited for decades.' [20a]

See also [Political affiliation](#)

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Pakistan Administered Kashmir (Azad Kashmir)

6.12 The Freedom House Freedom in the World 2012 – Pakistani Kashmir report, published 7 September 2012, stated:

'When British India was partitioned into India and Pakistan in 1947, the Hindu maharajah of Jammu and Kashmir tried to maintain his principality's independence, but he eventually ceded it to India in return for autonomy and future self-determination. Within months, India and Pakistan went to war over the territory. Following a UN-brokered ceasefire in 1949, Pakistan refused to withdraw troops from the roughly one-third of Jammu and Kashmir that it had occupied, but unlike India, it never formally annexed its portion. The Karachi Agreement of April 1949 divided Pakistani-administered Kashmir into two distinct entities—Azad (Free) Kashmir and the Northern Areas. Pakistan retained direct administrative control over the Northern Areas, while Azad Kashmir was given a degree of nominal self-government.' [5b]

6.13 The same source added '... June [2011] elections in Azad Kashmir produced a new government led by the Azad Kashmir People's Party. As ongoing talks between India and Pakistan yielded little substantive progress on the Kashmir dispute, China expanded its military presence and involvement in development projects in the region.' [5b]

6.14 Jane's Sentinel Security Risk Assessment for Pakistan noted, in its section on Pakistan-Administered Kashmir (PAK), dated 19 April 2013, that:

'AJK is still governed by the [1974 interim constitution](#) (the constitution is designated interim by the Assembly as AJK is not yet independent) that allows for limited self-government through a president, prime minister and state council, although in reality

power ultimately rests with the central government in Islamabad... **(Constitution)** 'The national government exercises political control over AJK through the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Council... **(Executive)** [which] is a legislative body and the de facto upper house to the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly. The council's main function is to act as a conduit between the federal government of Pakistan and the administration in PAK. It is chaired by the prime minister of Pakistan, and the vice-chairman is the president of AJK.' **[1a] (Leadership)**

- 6.15 The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, stated that Azad Kashmir had no representation in the national parliament, but:

'... has an interim constitution, an elected unicameral assembly, a prime minister, and a president, who is elected by the assembly. Both the president and legislators serve five-year terms. Of the 49 assembly seats, 41 are filled through direct elections and eight are reserved seats (five for women and one each for representatives of overseas Kashmiris, technocrats, and religious leaders). However, the federal government exercised considerable control over the structures of government and electoral politics. Its approval is required to pass legislation, and the federal minister for Kashmir affairs exercised significant influence over daily administration and the budget. The Kashmir Council, composed of federal officials and Kashmiri assembly members and chaired by the federal prime minister, also holds some executive, legislative, and judicial powers. The military retains a guiding role on issues of politics and governance. Those who do not support Azad Kashmir's accession to Pakistan were barred from the political process, government employment, and educational institutions. They also were subject to surveillance, harassment, and sometimes imprisonment by security services.'

(Section 3) The same source noted that Azad Kashmir had '... a court system independent of the country's judiciary.' **[3n] (Section 1e)**

- 6.16 The Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) reported on 26 June 2011 that: 'The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) has secured [a] majority in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Legislative Assembly by securing 19 seats in elections on Sunday. According to unofficial results of 34 seats so far, Pakistan Muslim League (N) stood at second position by grabbing nine seats, Muslim Conference got third position with four seats besides two independents.' **[123a]**
- 6.17 The USSD Report 2009, published 11 March 2010, stated that Kashmiris displaced from Indian-held Kashmir that had entered Pakistan were entitled to the same rights as full citizens. **[3b] (Section 2d)**

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Line of control

- 6.18 Under the Karachi Agreement a cease-fire line was established between Pakistan and India, supervised UN military observers (UNMOGIP – United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan). 'In July 1972, India and Pakistan signed an agreement defining a Line of Control [LoC] in Kashmir which, with minor deviations, followed the same course as the ceasefire line established by the Karachi Agreement in 1949. India took the position that the mandate of UNMOGIP had lapsed, since it related specifically to the ceasefire line under the Karachi Agreement. Pakistan, however, did not accept this position.' (UNMOGIP Background, date accessed 27 June 2013) **[89]**

6.19 UNMOGIP also noted:

‘Given the disagreement between the two parties over UNMOGIP’s mandate and functions, the Secretary-General’s position has been that UNMOGIP could be terminated only by a decision of the Security Council. In the absence of such an agreement, UNMOGIP has been maintained with the same arrangements as established following December 1971 ceasefire. The tasks of UNMOGIP have been to observe, to the extent possible, developments pertaining to the strict observance of the ceasefire of 17 December 1971 and to report thereon to the Secretary-General.

‘The military authorities of Pakistan have continued to lodge complaints with UNMOGIP about ceasefire violations. The military authorities of India have lodged no complaints since January 1972 and have restricted the activities of the UN observers on the Indian side of the Line of Control. They have, however, continued to provide accommodation, transport and other facilities to UNMOGIP.’ **[89]**

6.20 The Freedom in the World 2012 – Pakistani Kashmir report stated: ‘A bus service linking the capitals of Indian and Pakistani Kashmir was launched in 2005, allowing some civilians to reunite with family members. A second intra-Kashmir bus route was launched in 2006, and limited trade across the Line of Control resumed in 2008 for the first time in over 60 years.’ **[5b]**

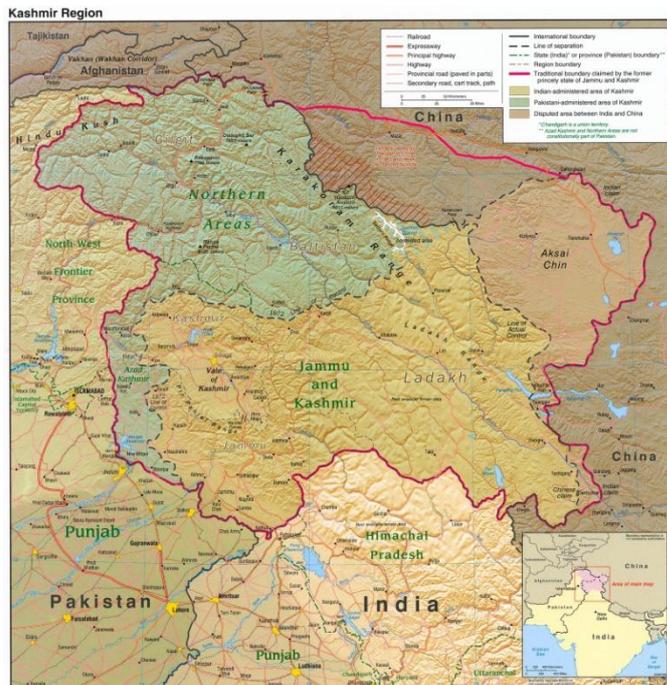
6.21 Following a 2009 opinion poll, conducted on both sides of the LoC, a Chatham House paper, Kashmir: Paths to Peace, dated May 2010, stated, with regards to freedom of movement, that ‘The LoC is an almost complete barrier to movement. 8% of the respondents claimed to have friends or family living on the other side of the LoC but only 1% of the total population had visited in the last five years. Less than 5% knew anyone who had crossed the LoC in the last five years.’ **[86] (p20)**

See also: [Freedom of movement](#)

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Map

6.22 Map of Kashmir region, dated 2004, extracted from the University of Texas at Austin, Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection (click on map for full access).



<http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/dpko/unmogip.pdf>

[82b]

Gilgit-Baltistan (formerly known as the Northern Areas)

6.23 The Freedom House Freedom in the World 2012 – Pakistani Kashmir report, published 7 September 2012, noted ‘In Gilgit-Baltistan, nationalist groups’ demands for greater autonomy remained unfulfilled in 2011, and there was an increase in demonstrations as well as harassment and targeted killings of Shiites and political activists during the year.’ [5b]

6.24 The same source added:

‘Nationalist and proindependence groups in the Northern Areas continued to agitate for increased political rights, and in August 2009 Islamabad issued the Gilgit-Baltistan Empowerment and Self-Governance Order (GBESGO), which renamed the region and replaced the Northern Areas Legal Framework Order (LFO) of 1994. It provided for a somewhat more powerful legislative body, the Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly (GBLA), with the authority to choose a chief minister and introduce legislation on 61 subjects. While the government argued that the GBESGO established full internal autonomy, nationalist groups noted that a governor appointed by the Pakistani president would still be the ultimate authority and could not be overruled by the new assembly. Moreover, many subjects were excluded from the assembly’s purview.

‘In November 2009 elections for the GBLA, the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP), the ruling party at the federal level, won 12 of 24 directly elected seats; 10 of the remainder were divided among four other parties and four independents, and voting for two seats was postponed. Syed Mehdi Shah, head of the PPP’s Gilgit-Baltistan chapter, became chief minister. Following the death of Governor Shama Khalid from cancer in September 2010, Pir Karam Ali Shah, a member of the GBLA, was appointed as governor in January 2011. In a by-election held in April, Nawaz Khan Naji, leader of the Balawaristan National Front (BNF), became the first member of the GBLA from a separatist party, defeating PPP and PML-N candidates by a large margin.’ [5b]

6.25 The USSD Report 2010 noted that 'Gilgit-Baltistan (formerly known as the Northern Areas) also has a separate judicial system. The Gilgit-Baltistan Self-governance Order 2009 instituted a separate judiciary, legislature, and election commission for the region. Formerly the laws of the country were extended to the Gilgit-Baltistan at the discretion of the Ministry for Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. The Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Court did not have all the powers of a high court.' **[3g] (Section 1e)**

6.26 Jane's Sentinel Security Risk Assessment for Pakistan noted, in its section on Pakistan-Administered Kashmir (PAK), dated 19 April 2013:

'The anomalous constitutional situation of Gilgit-Baltistan has led to resentment within sections of the population about the territory's lack of political identity... dissatisfaction has arisen within Gilgit-Baltistan, counter-intuitively leading to demands for separation from Pakistan despite the region's historical pro-Pakistan policy. Some political and religious figures have called for either an independent state of Kashmir including AJK and Indian-administered Kashmir, or a separate state of Balawaristan (from Boloristan, an older name for Gilgit-Baltistan)... Although still relatively benign, with few indications of any organised armed groups pursuing these demands, and although to date there has been little support for their activities, the situation is a concern for the stability of PAK in the medium term should any group attempt to organise resistance to Pakistani control.' **[1a] (Separatism)**

For more detailed information on Azad Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan see the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research Documentation (ACCORD) [COI Compilation on Pakistan-administered Kashmir \(Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan\)](#), dated 7 May 2012, and the Freedom House [Freedom in the World 2012 – Pakistani Kashmir](#), published 7 September 2012.

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Human Rights

7. Introduction

7.01 The Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review (UPR), which reviewed Pakistan on 30 October 2012, provided a brief summary of the UPR Working Group meeting with Pakistan. The brief noted some positive achievements, acknowledged by the delegations, including:

- ‘Laws adopted and steps taken to protect women and girls from violence and discrimination;
- The ratification of a number of international instruments;
- Efforts to uphold human rights given challenges posed by natural disasters and vast number of refugees in the country;
- The creation of an independent National Human Rights Commission in May 2012 in compliance with the Paris Principles;
- The recent constitutional reform undertaken;
- The application of a de facto moratorium on the death penalty.’ [79f]

7.02 The States participating in the UPR dialogue also made recommendations to Pakistan, which included:

- ‘Taking additional measures to combat all forms violence and discrimination against women and enacting provincial legislation on domestic violence;
- Adopting measures to eliminate early and forced marriages and removing reservations made to the ICCPR [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights] pertaining to women’s rights;
- Taking additional measures to promote and protect the rights of human rights defenders including setting up a national policy and bringing perpetrators of related attacks to justice and bringing to justice perpetrators of attacks on journalists;
- Enhancing efforts to promote and protect the human rights of religious minorities and investigating attacks and violence against religious minorities and holding accountable those responsible for such acts;
- Amending the law on blasphemy ensuring it was in line with international law and stepping up efforts to guarantee the freedom of religion and supporting programmes aimed at strengthening religious freedom and tolerance;
- Formally abolishing the death penalty;
- Investigating allegations of extra-judicial killings in Baluchistan and halting operations aimed at silencing dissent in Baluchistan;
- Ensuring the provision of free primary education to all children and taking additional measures to reduce illiteracy;
- Strengthening the national commission on inquiry on forced disappearances providing it with greater authority and resources to conduct investigations;
- Providing adequate resources to the National Human Rights Commission;
- Extending an open invitation to Special Procedures mandate holders;
- Ratification of human rights instruments: the Convention on enforced or involuntary disappearances, the OPCAT [Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture], the Rome Statute of the ICC [International Criminal Court], the OP to CEDAW [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of

Discrimination Against Women] , the OP to the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, the first OP to the CRC [Convention on the Rights of the Child], the 1951 Convention on Refugees and its OP, and the Convention on Statelessness, the Convention on the rights of migrant workers, and ILO [International Labour Organization] Convention 189.’ [79f]

- 7.03 The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), in its 2012 Human Rights and Democracy Report (FCO Report 2012), published 15 April 2013, identified Pakistan as a country of concern with regards to its human rights, and observed that, despite some positive political and legal developments:

‘... there remain also acute human rights challenges in a very difficult security environment. The state carried out the first execution in four years in November and there continue to be reports of mistreatment and extrajudicial killings by the security forces with impunity. The past year has seen significant terrorist and sectarian violence and continuing persecution of religious and ethnic minorities. The government of Pakistan has made some progress, continuing the legislative successes of 2011, by passing bills to create a new National Commission for Human Rights and to protect women from violence, but it needs to go further to ensure that these meet international standards, and it will also be judged on how well it implements the legislation. The National Commission was still not up and running six months after the bill establishing it was passed.’ [11e]

- 7.04 The Express Tribune reported on 12 March 2012 that the Senate passed the National Commission of Human Rights Act 2011. The bill allows the National Commission of Human Rights (NCHR) to investigate cases of abuse committed by the authorities, including the armed forces and intelligence agencies, although in such cases would only be able to make recommendations to the government. The NCHR may also visit any government detention facility to ensure applicable laws relating to inmates are being complied with. [92f]

- 7.05 The Asian Human Rights Commission, commenting on the speech made by Pakistan’s foreign minister, Ms. Rabbani Khar, at the UN Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on Pakistan, stated on 4 November 2012 that:

‘While it is appreciated that the NCHR has been created in accordance with the Paris Principles the claims by the government that the NCHR will visit detention centres and monitor the human rights situation and that it will be independent and can summon and try officers of the armed forces is to be viewed with extreme suspicion in the absence of a single successful prosecution. In fact, the government has turned a blind eye time and time again to the arrogance of the police and armed forces in their blatant refusal to comply with the orders of the courts. Despite the fact that the higher courts are independent, the officers of these institutions regularly fail to attend hearings. In view of this it is yet to be seen as to how the NCHR will improve the human rights situation in the country without having any judicial power. This Commission is likely to prove a futile exercise and place more burdens on the exchequer.’ [52m]

- 7.06 The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) stated in its report, The State of Human Rights in Pakistan in 2012 (AHRC Report 2012), published 10 December 2012, that:

‘... continuing political instability, frailty and failure of the country’s institutions related to the rule of law, ongoing impunity enjoyed by perpetrators of violations – notably the police, military, and intelligence services – and persistent grave human rights violations,

along with the humanitarian problems associated with the most devastating floods in the history of Pakistan in, mean that the human rights and security situation has worsened in 2012.

‘Widespread corruption, religious extremism, armed conflict, terrorism and counter-terrorism, allied with weak institutions, and impunity for perpetrators, engender grave abuses, such as torture, forced disappearances, extra-judicial killings, and discrimination and violence against religious minorities and women.’ **[52n] (p1)**

7.07 The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 on Pakistan (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, stated that:

‘The most serious human rights problems were extrajudicial and targeted killings, forced disappearances, and torture, which affected thousands of citizens in nearly all parts of the country.

‘Other human rights problems included poor prison conditions, arbitrary detention, lengthy pretrial detention, a weak criminal justice system, insufficient training for prosecutors and criminal investigators, a lack of judicial independence in the lower courts, and infringements on citizens’ privacy rights. Harassment of journalists, some censorship, and self-censorship continued. There were some restrictions on freedom of assembly and some limits on freedom of movement. Religious freedom violations and discrimination against religious minorities continued, including some violations sanctioned by law. Corruption was widespread within the government and the police forces, and the government made few attempts to combat the problem. Rape, domestic violence, sexual harassment, “honor” crimes and other harmful traditional practices, abuse, and discrimination against women remained serious problems. Child abuse and commercial sexual exploitation of children persisted. Widespread human trafficking--including forced and bonded labor--was a serious problem. Societal discrimination against national, ethnic, and racial minorities continued, as did discrimination based on caste, sexual orientation, gender identity, and HIV status. Lack of respect for worker rights continued.

‘Lack of government accountability remained a pervasive problem. Abuses often went unpunished, fostering a culture of impunity. Authorities punished government officials for human rights violations in very few instances.

‘Violence, abuse, and social and religious intolerance by militant organizations and other nongovernmental actors contributed to a culture of lawlessness in some parts of the country, particularly Balochistan, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP, formerly known as the North West Frontier Province), and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).’ **[3n] (Executive summary)**

7.08 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its annual report, State of Human Rights in 2011 (HRCP Report 2011), published March 2012, welcomed some positive developments in 2011, including the ‘Ratification of a key child rights instrument, extension of Political Parties Act to FATA, introduction of laws to promote women’s rights, religious minorities getting representation in the Senate, and a right to statutory bail for detainees in prisons...’ **[27g] (p1)**

7.09 However, the HRCP Report 2011 added that:

‘Unfortunately, the inability to introduce implementation mechanisms for international human rights treaties ratified by Pakistan remained unchanged, as did the indifference

to or complicity with banning women from voting, and curbing disappearances and extrajudicial killings. The moratorium on executions stayed informal. The prisons remained at breaking point. Nothing was done to revive elected student unions in educational institutions or end the glut of weapons across the country. The public education system remained a scandal, the budgetary allocations to public healthcare fell even further, the government ceded ground to extremists and was utterly unprepared at the framework level to cope with internal displacement and its impact.’ [27g] (p1)

7.10 Human Rights Watch (HRW) noted in its World Report 2013 on Pakistan, published 31 January 2013, that:

‘Pakistan had a turbulent year in 2012, with the judicial ouster of Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani, attacks on civilians by militant groups, growing electricity shortages, rising food and fuel prices, and continuing political dominance of the military, which operates with almost complete impunity. Religious minorities continued to face insecurity and persecution as the government failed to provide protection to those threatened or to hold extremists accountable. Islamist militant groups continued to target and kill Shia Muslims – particularly from the Hazara community – with impunity. In September, the southwestern province of Balochistan experienced massive flooding for the third year running, displacing some 700,000 people.’ [7i]

7.11 The same report added ‘Ongoing rights concerns included the breakdown of law enforcement in the face of terror attacks, continuing abuses across Balochistan, ongoing torture and ill-treatment of criminal suspects, and unresolved enforced disappearances of terrorism suspects and opponents of the military. Abuses by Pakistani police, including extrajudicial killings, also continued to be reported throughout the country in 2012.’ [7i]

7.12 The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) reported on 15 March 2011 that more than 8,000 prisoners remained on ‘death row’, some having been there for 20 years. Despite the number having risen from 5,447 in 2005 there has been no increase in the capacity of Pakistan’s prisons. [52c]

7.13 The AHRC Report 2010 added that the Pakistan government ‘...has been unable to commute these death sentences because of strong resistance from powerful groups such as the higher judiciary and the military.’ [52e] (p1)

See also [Death penalty](#)

7.14 Amnesty International noted in its Annual Report 2013, for Pakistan, published 23 May 2013, that:

‘The Pakistani Taliban’s assassination attempt on a teenage human rights activist in October underscored the serious risks faced by human rights defenders and journalists in the country. Religious minorities suffered persecution and attacks, with targeted killings by armed groups and religious leaders inciting violence against them. The Armed Forces and armed groups continued to perpetrate abuses in the tribal areas and Balochistan province, including enforced disappearances, abductions, torture and unlawful killings. The courts successfully compelled the authorities to bring a handful of victims of enforced disappearance before them, but failed to bring perpetrators to justice in fair trials. In November, the military authorities carried out Pakistan’s first execution since 2008. Attacks on health workers had a significant impact on access to medical services in remote and strife-torn regions of the country. Parliament passed laws, in

February and March respectively, on the establishment of separate national commissions on the status of women and on human rights.’ **[13h]**

7.15 Pakistan has signed and in some cases ratified a number of international human rights instruments, including:

- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;
- Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women;
- Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. (UN Human Rights, Pakistan, accessed 7 September 2011) **[79d] (Status of ratifications)**

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8. Security situation

8.01 The Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2012 Human Rights and Democracy Report, published 15 April 2013, observed ‘Pakistan continues to deal with a high rate of terrorist and sectarian violence, in particular in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Karachi, Peshawar, Quetta and wider Balochistan. State security forces, supporters of political parties, sectarian groups and wider communities are the most frequent targets. The perpetrators are rarely caught and brought to justice.’ **[11e] (Conflict and protection of civilians)**

8.02 The Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS) noted in its section on Conflict Drivers, accessed 18 June 2013, regarding military operations, that:

‘Since 2004, [the] Pakistan Army has been carrying out military operations in different agencies of FATA and also in some settled areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). The army has also deployed over 100,000 troops along the Pak-Afghan border to curtail militant infiltration into Afghanistan. Also, intrusion of al Qaeda and Taliban in the tribal areas forced the army to conduct search and surveillance operations, and also establish additional check posts. The presence and operations of the army in the tribal areas enraged the tribesmen, who until then had not been familiar with the army at all. They found it very difficult to reconcile with the new situation. Right-wing political parties such as JUI-F [Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam-Fazal ur-Rehman] and Jamaat-e Islami [JI] exploited these conditions, and have kept calling for the pullout of the army from tribal areas.’ **[59c] (Military operations)**

8.03 The same source added that ‘... poor populations are most vulnerable to the propaganda used by extremist groups to recruit more people to their cause. In many cases, they also provide food and shelter, making it more appealing for poor populations to turn to violence and extremism.’ **(Poverty)** Furthermore ‘... high levels of unemployment enable militant organizations to recruit also the better educated, mature and experienced young people of the society.’ **[59c] (Unemployment)**

See also [Economy](#) and [Humanitarian issues](#)

- 8.04 The CRSS provided security updates in [Pakistan Conflict Tracker Monthly Reports](#), accessed 19 June 2013. **[59a]**
- 8.05 The Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) reported in its Pakistan Security Report 2012 (PIPS Report 2012), dated 4 January 2013, that ‘A downward trend in the number of overall incidents of violence and casualties, which had started in 2010 continued in 2011 and 2012...’ **(p5)** However, despite this decline ‘Militant, nationalist insurgent and violent sectarian groups carried out a total of 1,577 terrorist attacks across Pakistan in 2012, claiming the lives of 2,050 people and causing injuries to another 3,822.’ **[100a] (p7)**
- 8.06 The South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) cited different statistics on terrorist-related fatalities and stated in its Pakistan Assessment 2013, accessed 21 June 2013, that:
- ‘As in 2011, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) remained the worst affected region, in terms of fatalities, followed by Sindh. However, Balochistan, which was “ranked” fourth and KP, which was at the third position in 2011, reversed their respective positions in 2012. The Punjab Province remained at its earlier position, the fifth and least afflicted region of the country... According to partial data compiled by the South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP), the country recorded a total of at least 6,211 terrorism-related fatalities, including 3,007 civilians, 2,472 militants and 732 Security Forces (SF) personnel in 2012 as against 6,303 fatalities, including 2,738 civilians, 2,800 militants and 765 SF personnel in 2011. [Since media access is heavily restricted in the most disturbed areas of Pakistan, and there is only fitful release of information by Government agencies and media reportage, the actual figures could be much higher]. The first 69 days of 2013, have already witnessed 1,537 fatalities, including 882 civilians, 116 SF personnel and 539 militants.’ **[61b]**
- 8.07 The US Department of State Country Reports on Terrorism 2012 – Pakistan, published 30 May 2013, stated:
- ‘Over 2,000 Pakistani civilians and 680 security forces personnel were killed in terrorist-related incidents in 2012. Terrorist incidents occurred in every province. Terrorists attacked Pakistani military units, police stations, and border checkpoints, and conducted coordinated attacks against two major military installations. Terrorists displayed videos on the internet of the murders and beheadings of security forces. Terrorist groups also targeted police and security officials with suicide bombings and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Terrorist groups targeted and assassinated tribal elders, members of peace committees, and anti-Taliban government officials. The TTP often claimed responsibility for attacks targeting civilians and security personnel in Pakistan.’ **[3r] (Chapter 2: Country reports: South and Central Asia Overview)**
- 8.08 Human Rights Watch noted in its World Report 2013 (HRW World Report 2013), published 31 January 2013, covering 2012 events, that ‘Suicide bombings, armed attacks, and killings by the Taliban, al Qaeda, and their affiliates continued in 2012, targeting politicians, journalists, religious minorities, and government security personnel. Many of these attacks were claimed by groups such as the Haqqani network, the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, and other al Qaeda affiliates.’ **(Militant attacks and counterterrorism)** The report added ‘Sunni militant groups, including those with known links to the Pakistani military, its intelligence agencies, and affiliated paramilitaries – such as the ostensibly banned Lashkar-e Jhangvi – operated with widespread impunity

across Pakistan, as law enforcement officials effectively turned a blind eye to attacks.’
[7i] (Sectarian attacks)

8.09 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan stated in its annual report, ‘State of Human Rights in 2012’ (HRCP Report 2012), published March 2013, that:

‘The year 2012 saw the law and order situation in Pakistan deteriorate even further. The number of target killings in Karachi saw a stark increase as compared to last year, which itself was very high. It became increasingly clear that the writ of the state was withering away in the largest, most metropolitan city in Pakistan. The state failed to provide protection to its religious and ethnic minorities as they were threatened and attacked repeatedly in various parts of the country. Shia killings increased manifold, especially in Quetta where the Hazara Shia community remained vulnerable. The year also saw the targeting of high profile politicians and human rights activists which spoke volumes about the state’s inability to provide protection to its citizens.

‘The entire country was plagued with pockets of areas where terrorists and criminals out rightly made a mockery of the writ of the state. Sectarian violence at the hands of banned outfits continued unabated in Balochistan while different criminal elements targeted rival groups with impunity in Karachi. The intelligence agencies, though severely criticised by international human rights organisations, continued their kill and dump operations.

‘Even though crime rates in Punjab and the number of terror attacks in the country declined in 2012, the country was far from a safe haven for all its citizens. The Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, the militant group linked to Al Qaeda, was able to murder the warden of Central Jail Mach in May by claiming that he treated their imprisoned leaders harshly.’
[27b] (p60)

See also Security forces: [Intelligence agencies](#)

8.10 Critical Threats, a project of the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research (AEI), provided almost daily updates, dated from June 2009 to present, of the security situation in Pakistan, in its [Pakistan Security Brief](#), accessed 21 June 2013. **[101b]**

8.11 The CRSS also provided a [Timeline of Violent Incidents](#), from 1 March 2012 to present, accessed 21 June 2013. **[59b]**

8.12 The [PIPS Report 2012](#) provided a breakdown of terrorist attacks in Pakistan during 2012 by Province/area, as well as the nature of the attacks. **[100a] (p7)**

8.13 The South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) reported in its Pakistan Assessment 2012, accessed 21 March 2012, that, overall, terrorist violence in Pakistan caused 6,142 fatalities during 2011, dropping from 7,435 in 2010. The report stated there was a large increase in the deaths of civilian and Security Force (SF) personnel, although a drop in militant deaths. According to the SATP database 2,580 civilians, 765 SF personnel and 2,797 militants were killed in 2011. **[61b]**

8.14 The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, stated that:

‘During the year militant and terrorist activity continued in different KP and FATA areas, and there were numerous suicide and bomb attacks in all four provinces and FATA. Security forces reportedly committed extrajudicial killings. Militants and terrorist groups,

including the TTP, a militant umbrella group, targeted civilians, journalists, schools, community leaders, security forces, and law enforcement agents, killing hundreds and injuring thousands with bombs, suicide attacks, and other forms of violence. Militant and terrorist groups often attacked religious minorities. A low-level separatist insurgency continued in Balochistan.

‘The government implemented some measures to protect the population. The Pakistani military continued to conduct counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations in the FATA to stem the TTP militancy. The government also took actions to weaken terrorist ties around the country and prevent recruitment by militant organizations. For example, law enforcement agencies reported the seizure of large caches of weapons in urban areas such as Islamabad and Karachi. Police arrested Karachi gang members and TTP commanders who provided logistical support to militants in the tribal areas. Police arrested would-be suicide bombers in major cities of the country, confiscating weapons, suicide vests, and attack planning materials. The government continued to operate a center in Swat to rehabilitate and educate former child soldiers.

‘Poor security, intimidation by security forces and militants, and the control the government and security forces exercised over access by nonresidents to FATA continued to make it difficult for human rights organizations and journalists to report on military abuses in the region.’ **[3n] (Section 1g)**

- 8.15 Jane’s noted in the Executive Summary, updated 19 June 2013, of its Sentinel Security Assessment for Pakistan, that:

‘Despite a series of offensives, extremist violence remains the most pressing threat to stability. Recent offensives include Operation Rah-e-Nijat (Road to Deliverance) against the Pakistani Taliban in South Waziristan, following the death of Baitullah Mehsud, and the March 2010 offensive in Orakzai tribal agency. While the army may temporarily secure the key population areas in the Mehsud-dominated parts of the agency, it is unlikely to be able either to hold these parts over the short term or to extend the writ of the state to the region over the long term. A series of incidents have highlighted the deterioration in security and the growing symbiotic relationship between Punjabi-based and tribal-based jihadist organisations: most notably the 20 September 2008 attack on the Marriott Hotel and a series of high-profile attacks throughout 2009 in Punjab’s key cities. The most audacious attack to date was the 11 October 2009 storming of the Pakistani army General Headquarters in Rawalpindi. Tension along the Afghan border, primarily in the tribal areas, has greatly increased, with areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also witnessing almost daily violence, especially the capital of Peshawar.’ **[1a] (Security threats)**

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US airstrikes

- 8.16 The Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS) noted in its Pakistan Conflict Tracker on ‘Conflict Drivers’, undated, that:

‘Drone attacks, carried out by the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA),... serve as a driving factor behind the militant upsurge. Right-wing religio-political parties and sympathizers of al Qaeda and Taliban condemn the drone attacks as a “violation of Pakistani sovereignty”, and therefore also use them to justify their opposition to the

military's counter-insurgency efforts. It increases anger and feeling of revenge even in the local population of the drone hit areas, resulting in an increase in terrorist acts against the government and the military forces of the country.' **[59c] (Drone attacks)**

- 8.17 The Long War Journal, last updated 29 May 2013, accessed 4 June 2013, noted in its report Charting the data for US airstrikes in Pakistan, 2004 – 2013, using data obtained from various Pakistani press sources as well as from its own reporting, that:
- 'The US ramped up the number of strikes in July 2008, and has continued to regularly hit at Taliban and Al Qaeda targets inside Pakistan. There have been 339 strikes [in] total since the program began in 2004; 329 of those strikes have taken place since January 2008. Since 2006, there have been 2,514 leaders and operatives from Taliban, Al Qaeda, and allied extremist groups killed and 153 civilians killed... Over the past six years, the strikes have focused on two regions: North and South Waziristan. Over the past two years, there has been a dramatic shift in the location of the strikes. In 2009, 42% of the strikes took place in North Waziristan and 51% in South Waziristan. In 2010, 89% of the strikes have taken place in North Waziristan and 6% in South Waziristan.'
- [37a]**
- 8.18 The Bureau of Investigative Journalism recorded in its 3 January 2013 update on drone strikes in Pakistan, that, since 2004, 370 US airstrikes (318 since the Obama administration) had killed between 2,548 to 3,549 people in total, which included 411 to 890 civilians. **[124a]**
- 8.19 The Long War Journal provided a list, last updated 3 January 2013, accessed 4 June 2013, of Senior al Qaeda and Taliban leaders killed in US airstrikes in Pakistan, 2004 - 2013. **[37b]**
- 8.20 The HRCP Report 2012 noted 'The number of drone attacks has declined recently but the fact remains that a certain complicity and silence surrounds this grave issue. Media reports put the number of drone attacks in 2012 at 48 compared to 74 in 2011. The total number of casualties as a result of these attacks varied. Conservative estimates put the number around 240 while some estimates went as high as 400.' **[27b] (p62)**
- 8.21 In an article dated 4 October 2012, by Ahmed Wali Mujeeb, who visited the region of Waziristan in May 2012, BBC News reported on the psychological toll on the residents of the areas affected by drone strikes, as they lived in constant fear of attack. Mujeeb observed 'People here tell me that it is not just Taliban and al-Qaeda members who are targeted, many ordinary citizens have been killed as well... Taliban and local tribesmen say the drones almost always depend on a local spy, who gives word when the target is there... Anyone coming under suspicion is unlikely to get a hearing. The Taliban kill first and decide afterwards if the suspect was involved or not.' **[35k]**
- 8.22 A joint report 'Living Under Drones: Death, Injury and Trauma to Civilians from US Drone Practices in Pakistan', undated, accessed 5 October 2012, by the International Human Rights and Conflict Resolution Clinic of Stanford Law School (Stanford Clinic) and the Global Justice Clinic at New York University School of Law (NYU Clinic), presented evidence of the 'damaging and counterproductive effects of current US drone strike policies', following nine months of research from December 2011. **[136a]**

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Militant activity

8.23 Reporting on the violence in Pakistan, updated 11 April 2013, Reuters stated:

‘Pakistan's western border areas are racked by violence as government forces fight separatists and pro-Taliban militants. Hundreds of thousands of people have been displaced by the fighting. The main areas affected are Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (formerly known as North West Frontier Province) and the semi-autonomous Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) that have a strong Taliban presence, and Baluchistan, where separatists are seeking greater political autonomy and control over local mineral resources.’ **[10b] (In detail)**

8.24 The HRCP Report 2011 noted that:

‘In the conflict zones, where the military or paramilitary forces were facing off militants, the focus was on defeating the militants by military force and curbing crime, restoration of the law order did not appear to be as much of a priority. In Khyber and Kurram agencies of FATA sectarian tensions and attacks forced the minority Shia community to fend for itself. The Hazara Shias of Balochistan, who did not give any cause for offence to anyone and did not believe in taking up arms were visited by repeated massacres by banned sectarian groups that appeared to have no problem in moving about despite the litany of security check posts in Quetta and other big cities of the province.’ **[27g] (p56-57)**

8.25 The Asian Human Rights Commission, commenting on the speech made by Pakistan’s foreign minister, Ms. Rabbani Khar, at the UN Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on Pakistan, stated on 4 November 2012 that:

‘There have been numerous instances where leaders and spokesmen from banned organisations, some of them internationally wanted men, are allowed to make hate speeches in the public in full view of the authorities. These criminal elements collect public donations, but nothing is done to arrest them for fear of upsetting the extremists. Half-hearted attempts by the government has self-censored its capacity to deal with extremists. This has resulted in increase in extremist activities than the number of actions claimed by the government that it has taken against extremist groups... The government has arrested thousands of alleged extremists over the past four years but there have been no successful prosecutions due to the lack of proper witness protection and half-hearted attempts by the prosecutors to obtain a conviction.’ **[52m]**

8.26 The USSD Country Reports on Terrorism 2012 – Pakistan, stated:

‘Some banned organizations openly participated in political rallies and forged alliances with religious political parties. In September and October, militant groups and religious parties joined forces to protest and conduct public demonstrations nationwide over the video The Innocence of Muslims. Violence occurred during the early days of the protests. The government and security agencies undertook enhanced security measures during the protests and sought to convince the militant groups to participate peacefully.’ **[3r] (Chapter 2: Country reports: South and Central Asia Overview)**

8.27 The South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) provided a list of [Major incidents of Terrorism-related violence in Pakistan – 2013](#), accessed 24 June 2013. **[61n]**

- 8.28 Amnesty International stated in its Annual Report 2013, published 23 May 2013, that 'The Pakistani Taliban, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, the Balochistan Liberation Army and other armed groups targeted security forces and civilians, including members of religious minorities, aid workers, activists and journalists. They carried out indiscriminate attacks using improvised explosive devices and suicide bombs.' **[13h] (Abuses by armed groups)**
- 8.29 Jane's noted in its Executive summary, updated 19 June 2013, that:
- 'Despite tribal-based and Punjab-based militant groups operating in the country with relative impunity, militancy in Pakistan is not ethnically segregated. This means that militants from the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) have often been arrested during raids on Punjab-based organisations, while Punjabi members of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi [LeJ] and Jaish-e-Mohammed [JeM] from urban centres in Pakistan's heartland often operate for brief stints with the TTP [Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan] in the tribal belt before returning to their home districts. Indeed since 2002 LeJ members have become increasingly embedded in Pakistani Taliban factions based in the tribal areas. Furthermore, despite the death of Baitullah Mehsud in August 2009, security has continued to deteriorate in the tribal areas as well as in other parts of the country, namely Punjab. This has less to do with the appointment of Hakimullah Mehsud as Baitullah's successor than with the reality that militancy does not depend on individual commanders but on a grassroots network whose foundations are madrassahs, mosques and training camps scattered in villages, districts and urban centres across Pakistan.' **[1a] (Extremist militancy)**
- 8.30 The State of Human Rights in Pakistan in 2011, by the Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC Report 2011), published 10 December 2011, reported on the abduction of Shahbaz Taseer, son of assassinated governor of Punjab, Salam Taseer, by the militant banned group Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ). The report noted:
- 'It is confirmed that he is being held in the tribal badlands of Waziristan; his captors are religious extremists, and Taseer was sold to Taliban by the LeJ. It was reported that the LeJ is negotiating through the Punjab government for the release of Qadri [Salam Taseer's assassin, Mumtaz Qadri] in exchange for Shahbaz Taseer. The negotiations are apparently being carried out under the supervision of the law minister of Punjab province who is notorious for having relationships with the banned militant groups. Therefore all efforts for the release of Shahbaz have been in the interests of the militant organisations.' **[52g] (p40)**
- 8.31 Reporting on the kidnapping of children by militants, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its annual report, the State of Human Rights in 2011 (HRCP Report 2011), published March 2012, that:
- 'In September 2011, Taliban militants kidnapped 30 Pakistani boys from FATA as they picnicked just over the Afghan border. Sixty children were initially seized, but 20 children under the age of 12 years were immediately released and another ten were recovered through efforts of Pakistani officials. Of the 30 who continued to be in captivity, 17 were released in the first week of 2012. A similar incident had occurred in June 2009 when hundreds of Pakistani students from the tribal North Waziristan region were kidnapped by the Taliban, all were later released unharmed.' **[27g] (p181)**

See also Children: [Violence against children](#)

- 8.32 The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) noted in its Country Report for Pakistan, dated 7 October 2009, that ‘... the government and the military have encouraged the creation of lashkars (village militias) to help to counter the threat posed by TTP and TTP-linked groups in FATA and neighbouring parts of the NWFP. The government and the military provide intelligence and “logistical support” (which may or may not include arms) to the militias; villagers provide arms of their own, ranging from guns to axes to sticks.’ **[2f]**
(The Political Scene)
- 8.33 The Daily Times reported on 22 October 2011, in an analysis of lashkars, that:
‘... due to the utter lack of state protection, several communities in FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have made anti-Taliban lashkars to protect themselves from the Taliban atrocities. The lashkars, made up of poor peasants, drivers and people who run small business are no match for the well-financed, well-armed, well-trained, battle hardened multi-ethnic Taliban and al Qaeda militants. The government of Pakistan provides no support to the lashkars in terms of weapons, fuel and rations for the lashkar volunteers and has left them exposed to the violent wrath of the Islamist militants. Entire communities who provided volunteers for the lashkars have tremendously suffered and continue to suffer with no certain future in sight. Hundreds of anti-Taliban lashkar leaders have been killed. Women and school children have been attacked. Funerals as well as marriage ceremonies in such communities have been attacked, killing countless people. Their small businesses, like shops, have been attacked.’ **[55c]**
- 8.34 During the course of 2008 through to 2012 and into 2013, there were numerous clashes between the authorities and militants, primarily in the FATA and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP). There were also a number of attacks and suicide bombs against targets in Pakistan’s principal cities. The South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) provides a comprehensive [timeline](#) of events from 2002 to date, for the country generally and for individual provinces/territories. **[61c]**

See also subsection: [Federally Administered Tribal Areas](#) and [Pakistani Taliban](#)

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Balochistan (Baluchistan)

- 8.35 In its briefing on Pakistan violence, dated 11 April 2013, Reuters stated ‘Baluchistan lies to the southwest of FATA [Federally Administered Tribal Areas], bordering both Iran and Afghanistan, and is made up primarily of Baluch and Pashtun ethnic groups. Baluch tribal militants are fighting a decades-long insurgency for greater political autonomy and control over local mineral resources. Afghan Taliban fighters also operate in the area, as do Pakistani militant groups.’ **[10b]** **(In detail: Baluchistan)**
- 8.36 The HRW World Report 2013, covering 2012 events, observed:
‘The human rights crisis continued to worsen in the mineral-rich province of Balochistan. Human Rights Watch recorded continued enforced disappearances and killings of suspected Baloch militants and opposition activists by the military, intelligence agencies, and the paramilitary Frontier Corps. Baloch nationalists and other militant groups also stepped up attacks on non-Baloch civilians. Pakistan’s military continued to publicly resist government reconciliation efforts and attempts to locate ethnic Baloch who had been subject to “disappearances.” Pakistan’s government appeared powerless

to rein in the military's abuses. As a result, large numbers of Hazara community members sought asylum abroad.' **[7i] (Balochistan)**

8.37 The HRCP Report 2012 stated:

'Balochistan has been considered the most volatile region in the country for some time now and the situation has aggravated in recent years due to the rise of violent sectarian groups... According to media reports, 758 members of the Shia community have been killed from 2008 till 2012; of these, 338 belonged to the Hazara community...

'The general law and order situation in Balochistan was also far from secure as 8,201 crimes were reported in 2012. The main highways leading to Balochistan were termed unsafe, especially for night travel. The local business community was adversely affected since delivery of raw materials or products was rarely timely. A total of 261 people were murdered while 210 attempted murders were recorded in 2012 in Balochistan.' **[27b] (p64-65)**

See also [Sectarian violence](#)

8.38 On 30 August 2012, the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, Amnesty International stated in an open letter to the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, Rajaz Pervez Ashraf, that:

'Enforced disappearances, abductions and extra-judicial executions continue with impunity at an alarming rate in Balochistan. Reportedly, hundreds of Baloch activists, teachers, journalists and lawyers have been abducted or killed in the last two years alone. The bullet-ridden bodies of individuals, who have been forcibly disappeared or abducted and many bearing apparent marks of torture, are found across the province almost every day.

'In many cases, victims' families blame these incidents on Pakistan's security forces, especially the Frontier Corps and intelligence services. The security forces deny the charges and claim that the deaths are a result of tribal differences between Baloch militant groups. However, in many of the cases Amnesty International has documented, the victims were last seen alive being led away by uniformed Frontier Corps soldiers, often accompanied by men in plain clothes, in front of multiple witnesses at military checkpoints and in cities and towns. Regardless of determining blame for these and other killings in Balochistan, the fact they continue unabated represents one of the greatest failures of the Pakistan state to protect the right to life.' **[13k]**

8.39 The HRCP Report 2012 observed 'Mutilated bodies of suspected nationalists and terrorists continue to surface in Balochistan. Official reports said that 125 mutilated bodies were recovered till October 31, 2012 while unofficial stats were much higher than the official figures. The issue of missing persons in Balochistan, believed to be in the custody of security establishment's intelligence agencies, was taken up by the Supreme Court in the year under review.' **[27b] (p65)**

8.40 The SATP noted in its [Balochistan Assessment 2013](#), covering 2012 events, that:

'With Sindh and Gilgit Baltistan, Balochistan is the only region in Pakistan which has witnessed a rise in terrorism related fatalities in 2012. The Province witnessed 954 fatalities, including 690 civilians, 178 Security Force (SF) personnel and 86 militants in 418 incidents of killing in 2012, as against 711 fatalities, including of 542 civilians, 122 SF personnel and 47 militants in 294 incidents of killing in 2011, according to partial

data compiled by SATP. The first 13 days of 2013 have already recorded 144 fatalities [these numbers are likely to be underestimates, as access to media and independent observers is severely restricted in Balochistan].’ **[61g]**

8.41 The SATP noted in its [Balochistan Assessment 2010](#), that there were ‘...at least six active insurgent groups in Balochistan: the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), the Baloch Republican Army, the Baloch People's Liberation Front, the Popular Front for Armed Resistance, the Baloch Liberation Front (BLF) and [the Balochistan Liberation United Front] BLUF.’ The same source added that the BLUF was the ‘...most radical of the three Baloch separatist groups even though it isn't clear if these are separate or overlapping factions operating under different names.’ **[61i]**

8.42 The HRCP Report 2010 observed:

‘The federal government banned five Baloch organisations including the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), Baloch Liberation Front (BLF), Baloch Republican Army (BRA), Lashkar-e-Balochistan (LB) and Baloch Musalla Difa Organization. Interior Minister Rheman Malik said the five organisations were involved in suicide attacks, rocket attacks and killing of innocent people. He said no organisation using the name of “army” or “lashkar” would be allowed to work in the province and the security forces would launch targetted operation[s] against them. He said the State Bank of Pakistan had been asked to freeze the accounts of these organisations. Baloch separatist organisations often did not allow civil society outfits and non-Baloch political parties to freely carry out their activities in the province.’ **[27e] (p178)**

See also Political affiliation – [Opposition groups and political activists](#)

8.43 The HRCP Report 2010 stated:

‘In Balochistan, militant insurgents continued to target the security forces and non-Baloch residents of the province. Non-Baloch teachers were murdered in targeted killings. Many teachers were reported to have sought transfer to educational institutions in Pashtun-majority areas of Balochistan or resigned and migrated to other provinces. Baloch militant organisations often claimed responsibility for murder of the academic staff and tried to justify their acts as revenge for the excesses committed by the law enforcing agencies against the Baloch political activists.’ **[27e] (p84)**

8.44 The same report added:

‘In September, HRCP expressed serious concern at the government’s decision to give policing powers in Balochistan to the Frontier Corps (FC) and called the decision a retrogressive step. It said that the FC did not have a good reputation in Balochistan and demanded a reversal of the decision and political initiatives to address the situation. As many as 118 people were killed and 40 injured in 117 targeted killings in Balochistan in 2010. Those killed included at least 29 non-Baloch and 17 members of the Shia Hazara community.’ **[27e] (p84)**

8.45 BBC News reported on 24 November 2010 that, according to Balochistan’s chief minister, Sardar Aslam Raisani, ‘Pakistan's security agencies are involved in extrajudicial killings in Balochistan.’ The minister claimed that “Some of the abductions and killings are definitely carried out by security agencies...” He also stressed that some of the deaths were the responsibility of tribesmen who have been fighting for greater

political autonomy.’ The BBC added ‘Human rights organisations say kidnappings and murders of political dissidents are at an all-time high in the province.’ **[35f]**

- 8.46 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) undertook a fact-finding mission to Balochistan from the 15-19 May 2012. Its findings, including disappearances, extrajudicial killings and killings by militants, were published in the HRCP report [Hopes, fears and alienation in Balochistan](#), published 6 August 2012. The report included a list of missing persons and missing persons found dead. **[27h]**

See also Section: Security forces, Human rights violations by government forces: [Extrajudicial killings](#) and [Disappearances](#)

- 8.47 The SATP website provides a comprehensive timeline of incidents in Balochistan from 2003 through to 2013 in its [Balochistan Timeline](#), accessed 21 June 2013. **[61d]**
- 8.48 Jane’s reported in its Executive Summary, updated 19 June 2013, that in an attempt to address the root cause of conflict, a ‘Balochistan package’ (Aghaz-e-Haqooq-i-Balochistan) was presented before parliament on 24 November 2009:

‘Key issues addressed by the 39-point-package include the acknowledgement “that the question of provincial autonomy needs to be revisited and the ownership of the provinces over their resources reasserted in the constitution” and the determination “to correct the wrongs of history, by conferring the political, economic and cultural rights of the provinces”. Specific proposals comprise far-reaching constitutional, political, administrative and economic measures... The chances of positive movement on the Baloch insurgency have increased as a result of the 2013 election, with Baloch nationalist parties running and the central government deciding to appoint a nationalist, Abdul Malik Baloch, as chief minister. Less promising is any movement to dissuade the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi from targeting the province’s Hazara minority, who were the victims of a series of devastating attacks in 2012-13.’ **[1a] (Balochi Separatism)**

- 8.49 The SATP’s Balochistan Assessment 2013 stated that the Aghaz-e-Haqooq-i-Balochistan (Initiation of the rights of Balochistan) package, approved by Pakistan’s Parliament in 2009 had failed to deliver. SATP noted:

‘Though Parliamentary Secretary Khurram Jahangir Watto, on October 5, 2012, claimed that 42 of its 61 points had already been implemented, there has, in fact, been little progress on the issue of provincial autonomy, which according to the package, should have been immediately addressed. Though a parliamentary committee to look into the proposals and recommendations regarding provincial autonomy has been formed, the committee is yet to reach to any conclusion. Similarly, the proposal regarding initiation of a political dialogue with all major stakeholders in the political spectrum, to bring them into the mainstream politics, has not been met, as Government failed to inspire trust in the Baloch nationalist groups. The Government is yet to release political prisoners, another proposal in the package. While a range of financial elements in the package have been announced, implementation on the ground remains, at best, marginal.’ **[61g]**

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Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)

- 8.50 Amnesty International stated in its report ‘As If Hell Fell On Me’: The Human Rights Crisis in Northwest Pakistan, published 10 June 2010, that ‘FATA comprises seven so-

called Agencies: Khyber, Kurram, Orakzai, Mohmand, Bajaur, South Waziristan and North Waziristan. The 1998 census, the last available accurate set of data, registered close to 3.2 million people living in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas; current estimates suggest close to 3.9 residents in an area slightly smaller than Belgium at 27.22km[sq].’ [13e] (p20)

- 8.51 The Australian Government Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) stated in its Issues Paper ‘The Pakistani Taliban’, dated January 2013, that, in FATA ‘Though Pashtun Sunnis predominate, the region is also home to a relatively small Shia population and a small number of non-Pashtun tribes. Pashtuns typically follow either of the Hanafi schools of Islam (Barelvi and Deobandi), in addition to the Pashtunwali, an ancient Pashtun code of ethics which governs social interaction.’ (p2) The same source provided a map of the seven agencies of the FATA and the location of major tribal groups. [134c] (p3)
- 8.52 Reuters AlertNet noted in its briefing on Pakistan violence, updated 11 April 2013, that ‘Pakistani Taliban tribal groups have bases in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). They draw much of their resources from jihadi groups and their countrywide networks of mosques and religious seminaries, or madrasas.’ [10b] (In detail: **Federally Administered Tribal Areas**)
- 8.53 Critical Threats, a project of the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research (AEI), reported on 10 March 2011, that ‘North Waziristan agency is considered to be the epicenter of international terrorism. In addition to serving as a haven for al Qaeda’s leadership, North Waziristan (nestled between eastern Afghanistan and northwest Pakistan) also provides shelter to organizations such as the Haqqani network, the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), among others.’ [101a]
- 8.54 The South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) noted in its [FATA Assessment 2013](#), covering events in 2012, that:
- ‘As in previous year[s], violence continues wrack the Tribal Areas of Pakistan, though a marginal dip in fatalities was registered, in the country’s most volatile region. According to partial data compiled by the South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP), FATA registered a four per cent decline in overall terrorism-related fatalities, from 3,034 in 2011 to 2,901 in 2012. However, fatalities among civilians (549) and SFs (306), remained very high, increasing by 12.5 and 31.33 per cent, respectively. Terrorist fatalities declined from 2,313 in 2011, to 2,046 in 2012, principally due to the suspension of Army operations in many areas. Progressive suspension of military operations also resulted in a marginal decline in the major incidents (each involving three or more fatalities). A total of 261 major incidents were recorded in 2012, as against 281 in 2011.’ [61h]
- 8.55 The HRCP Report 2011 stated ‘As many as 643 terrorist attacks were reported in FATA, the highest for any region in the country...’ [27g] (p56)
- 8.56 The AI report ‘As If Hell Fell On Me’... stated:
- ‘In its military operations, Pakistan has deployed a wide array of security forces, including army soldiers, Inter-Service Intelligence agents, tribal levies called lashkars (official tribal militias) and khassadars (tribal police), the Frontier Constabulary (an armed police force operating in FATA border areas), and the Frontier Corps (a paramilitary force). The army and Frontier Corps (FC) are the two forces with the primary responsibility for maintaining law and order in FATA.’ [13e] (p32)

See also [Security forces](#)

8.57 In its section on Security, updated 23 April 2012, Jane's reported that:

'In spite of major military, and subsequent diplomatic, efforts at pacification, Pakistan's tribal frontier region abutting Afghanistan, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), remains highly volatile and unrest has spread to settled areas of KP [Khyber Pakhtunkhwa]. The border with Afghanistan is straddled by tribes of ancient lineage whose members cross freely for social and (mainly illegal) commercial purposes. In spite of sustained efforts on the part of Pakistan's security forces the border remains porous and the tribes continue to resist interference in their affairs. Confrontation between government forces and the region's inhabitants has alienated the tribes to an unprecedented degree, which has compelled Islamabad to undertake a strategy that continues to fluctuate between military offensives and political engagement. Successive government peace accords from 2004 onwards have done little to improve security in the region or expand the writ of the government. Moreover, the flow of militants from the FATA to Afghanistan continues unchecked and has increased significantly in recent months as manifested in the Afghan province of Nuristan where the Pakistani Taliban took control of remote districts near the Pakistan border.' **[1a] (Security: Terrorist/Insurgent threat)**

The South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) provides a comprehensive [timeline](#) of incidents in FATA from 2002 to the present. **[61c]**

See also sub-section [Pakistani Taliban](#)

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Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) (formerly known as North West Frontier Province – NWFP)

8.58 The online version of Encyclopaedia Britannica, accessed 24 June 2013, stated that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the northernmost province of Pakistan, is bordered by Afghanistan to the west and north, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan to the east and northeast, Punjab province to the southeast and Balochistan to the southwest. Peshawar is the capital city. The source noted 'On the western boundary of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, along the Afghan border, are the federally administered tribal areas, a series of semiautonomous areas that are ethnically homogeneous with the province but not politically connected to it.' The population of KP was estimated in 2006 to be 21,392,000 in an area covering 28,773 square miles (74,521 square km). **[66a]**

8.59 The AI report 'As If Hell Fell On Me'... stated:

'In March 2009, the Awami National Party government of NWFP agreed to the demands of the Malakand-based Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (TNSM) to introduce Islamic law and set up Islamic courts in Malakand division, with religious courts deciding all cases after 16 February 2009. The peace agreement also required that the army dismantle all checkposts, release captured insurgents including those responsible for unlawful killings and other abuses. The National Assembly passed the Nizam-e-Adl Act [Nizam-e-Adl Regulation – NAR] 2009 in April; it was signed into law by President Zardari, allegedly under pressure from the military leadership, on 13 April 2009.

However, in the same month, insurgents extended their operations into neighbouring Buner district, effectively breaking the peace accord.’ [13e] (p37)

- 8.60 The US Department of State’s International Religious Freedom Report for 2011 (USSD IRF 2011), published 30 July 2012, stated that ‘NAR implementation has been delayed due to military operations against militants, however. In January KP Chief Minister Ameer Haider Hoti inaugurated Darul Qaza (an appellate or revision court) in Swat as a step towards full implementation of the NAR. According to Hoti, 27,000 civil and 39,811 criminal cases were decided in 2009-10 under this law.’ [3p] (Section II)
- 8.61 The HRCP Report 2011 recorded 497 terrorist attacks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Twenty-seven suicide attacks accounted for the deaths of 438 people. [27g] (p56)
- 8.62 The South Asia Terrorism Portal noted in its Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assessment 2013, covering 2012 events, that:

‘Partial data compiled by the South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP), recorded at least 656 fatalities, including 363 civilians, 195 militants and 98 SF personnel, in 147 terrorism-linked incidents in 2012, as compared 1,206 fatalities, including 511 civilians, 364 militants and 331 SF personnel killed in 242 such incidents in 2011. The trend in fatalities indicates that the continuing engagement between the SFs and the militants is at its lowest since 2007.’ [61o]

See also Section: Security forces, Human rights violations by government forces: [Extrajudicial killings](#)

- 8.63 The South Asia Terrorism Portal provides a comprehensive [timeline](#) of incidents in KP from 2003 to the present. [61k]

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Pakistani Taliban – an overview

- 8.64 Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessment reported in its section on non-state armed groups, updated 19 April 2012, that:

‘The Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) was formed in December 2007 as an umbrella group that would enable the numerous pro-Taliban groups operating in Pakistan’s Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pukhtoonkhwa (formerly the NWFP) to co-ordinate their activities and consolidate their growing influence in the region. The constituents of the TTP already posed a significant threat throughout FATA and in areas of Khyber Pukhtoonkhwa, regularly confronting and defeating Pakistani security forces, while their ability to deploy suicide bombers made them a threat throughout the rest of Pakistan, even in military strongholds such as the garrison city of Rawalpindi. In addition, their control of much of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border has enabled them to forge strong operational links with the Afghan Taliban. Like the Afghan Taliban, the TTP’s ultimate objective is the creation of an Islamic emirate governed according to their fundamentalist Deobandi interpretation of sharia (Islamic law). However, unlike earlier Pakistani Taliban groups which focused solely on supporting the Afghan Taliban against the US-led coalition, the TTP is explicitly revolutionary, and is committed to overthrowing the Pakistani government. Following the failure of two high-profile government peace initiatives, military operations against the group have

increased, particularly with the Bajaur Agency in August 2008; Swat in April/May 2009; and South Waziristan in October 2009. The TTP suffered an additional setback in August 2009 when its founder and inspirational leader, Baitullah Mehsud, was killed. However, the TTP remains a powerful force on the ground in Pakistan's tribal areas under the new leadership of Hakimullah Mehsud, and remains capable of conducting high-yield suicide bomb attacks on hard targets throughout the country.' **[1a] (Islamist groups)**

- 8.65 In its Issues Paper 'The Pakistani Taliban', dated January 2013, the Australian Government Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) reported, amongst other things, on the TTP's organisation, areas of influence, aims and connections. **[134c]**
- 8.66 On the Tehrik-e-Nefaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (TNSM), Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment, Security section, updated 23 April 2012, noted that:
- 'On 16 February 2009, the provincial [KP] government agreed a truce with Sufi Mohammed's TNSM. As part of the truce, the provincial government agreed to implement sharia in the former Malakand division through the enforcement of the Nizam-e-Adl Regulation 2009 order. The truce followed the April 2008 peace accord that the NWFP government signed with Sufi Mohammad, which paved the way for his release from prison that year...' **[1a] (Security: Religious Militant)**
- 8.67 The TNSM rose to prominence in the mid-1990s following Swat's merger with Pakistan in 1969, after which its judicial system broke down due to corruption and lengthy trial procedures. Prior to the merger Swat's judicial system was a mixture of tribal and Sharia laws, allowing for swift dispensation of justice. Sufi Mohammed's son-in-law, Maulana Fazlullah, heads a breakaway faction of the TNSM that is the main threat to government control in Swat and the Makaland division. Fazlullah's group, which belongs to the umbrella Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) organisation, has led an insurgency in Swat since 2007. Fazlullah's group '...has set up parallel administrative structures in some of the districts of the former Malakand division, has burnt down numerous girls' schools and killed (often by beheading) artists, teachers, government officials, policemen, paramilitary soldiers and army troops.' (Jane's, 23 April 2012) **[1a] (Security: Religious Militant)**
- 8.68 Harvard University's Belfar Center for Science and International Affairs noted in an article dated April 2009 that:
- 'The Punjabi Taliban network is a loose conglomeration of members of banned militant groups of Punjabi origin – sectarian as well as those focused on the conflict in Kashmir – that have developed strong connections with Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Afghan Taliban and other militant groups based in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) [Now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – KP]. They shuttle between FATA and the rest of Pakistan, providing logistical support to FATA- and Afghan-based militants to conduct terrorist operations deep inside Pakistan. Between March 2005 and March 2007 alone, for example, about 2,000 militants from southern and northern Punjab Province reportedly moved to South Waziristan and started different businesses in an effort to create logistical support networks. Given their knowledge about Punjabi cities and security structure, they have proved to be valuable partners for the TTP as it targets cities in Punjab, such as Lahore, Rawalpindi and Islamabad...

'The most recent use of the name began in 2007, when Maulvi Nazir, a militant leader who with some official Pakistani support challenged Uzbek foreign fighters residing in South Waziristan, was hailed by some as a leader of the Punjabi Taliban. This allegation arose because Maulvi Nazir attracted many Punjabi recruits from banned organizations to fight Uzbek foreign fighters.' **[116a]**

8.69 The HRCP Report 2010 stated:

'Interior Minister Rehman Malik was quoted as saying that the LJ [Lashkar-e-Jhangvi] and the SSP [Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan] were united under the banner of the Punjabi Taliban, with the southern districts of Punjab as their hub. The interior minister said 726 workers of the banned outfits were present in southern Punjab. One hundred most wanted militants belonged to this region and out of a total of 13,500 registered madrassas (seminaries) in Punjab, 7,281 were located there.' **[27e] (p173)**

8.70 The RRT Issues Paper, 'The Pakistani Taliban', noted that the:

'Muqami Tehrik-e-Taliban (MTT) is the name given to an alliance between two former TTP commanders, Maulana Hafiz Gul Bahadur and Mullah Nazir. The former is an Uthmanzai Waziri from North Waziristan, while the latter is an Ahmadzai Waziri from South Waziristan. The two separated from the TTP in June 2008 because of the TTP's targeting of Pakistani security forces, and to protect Waziri interests (on the tribal nature of the TTP and MTT, see above under Tribes and Tribal Infighting). As with the TTP, the members of the MTT operate with a high degree of autonomy within their designated spheres of control.' **[134c]**

8.71 The Amnesty International report 'As If Hell Fell On Me': The Human Rights Crisis in Northwest Pakistan, published 10 June 2010, stated:

'It is difficult to delineate exactly how the Pakistani Taleban and their allied insurgent groups in FATA and northwestern Pakistan are organized, who commands them, and where they get their support: the groups' allegiances have shifted several times in recent years, and groups or parts of groups have moved from place to place, both within tribal agencies and across the border into Afghanistan. While most share an extreme religiously inspired militant ideology and a Pashtun identity, they vary widely in objectives and focus. However, many of the groups now share an operational plan, and have demonstrated that they possess effective chains of command and the ability to impose discipline on their ranks when they so desire.' **[13e] (p30)**

8.72 The same report added:

'In each of the FATA Agencies (and some parts of NWFP), the Pakistani Taleban followed a pattern similar to the strategy employed by the Taleban in Afghanistan in the mid 1990s. First, they attempted to gain the sympathies of the people by offering an alternative to the weak and inequitable governance system (in the case of Pakistan, as established under the FCR [Frontier Crimes Regulation]) and combating official corruption and ordinary criminal activity. After Taleban or other insurgents initially gained effective control over an area, they used violence and public punishments to impose codes of conduct based on their own radical interpretations of Islamic law, or Shari'a.

'The Taleban's violent conduct quickly shocked many locals, even though many people in northwest Pakistan adhered to conservative religious and cultural practices. Though

the region has a history of insurgency and conservative religious rule, its culture was based on old tribal norms, which differed significantly from the Taleban's ideology. As discussed below, the Taleban aggressively moved to weaken the existing tribal structure by killing or intimidating tribal elders and government officials, and their interpretation of Islamic law was much harsher than that espoused by most of the residents of northwest Pakistan. The Taleban forced men to maintain long beards; wear caps; not smoke, watch television, or listen to music; attend religious teachings; and pray five times a day at mosque. They used violence to force women to stay inside if not veiled, and to be accompanied by a male relative outside the home. Girls, too, were told to attend schools, if at all, wearing all-encompassing veils. Taleban forces also began to launch attacks against the government, those believed to support the government, and other political rivals. Local tribal elders told Amnesty International that militants began attacking military look-out posts (also known as pickets), bridges, schools, hospitals, electricity and mobile telephone towers, markets, and shops, civilian and military convoys, anti-Taleban tribal elders, and so-called spies.' **[13e] (p39)**

8.73 AI also noted that:

'One of the hallmarks of the Taleban's takeover of a territory has been the imposition of tribunals that apply their harsh interpretation of Islamic law. Over the past few years Taleban "tribunals" and other local systems of informal justice have been increasingly proliferating in Bajaur, Mohmand Agency, Orakzai, Khyber, and Waziristan agencies, and, at least for some time, in Swat and other areas of Malakand. Militants openly boasted of their enforcement operations: "Yes, we have arrested people and beaten them. One person was fined 5,000 rupees for not sporting a beard. Another two doctors were beaten," said a member of Haji Namdar's forces in Khyber Agency. Other punishments imposed and carried out range from shaving a person's head as a form of humiliation, to unlawful killings and public punishments such as lashing.' **[13e] (p43)**

See also Judiciary: [Tribal Justice System](#)

8.74 The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) noted in its Annual Report 2010 (USCIRF Report 2010), published May 2010, that:

'By early 2009, Sunni extremists gained effective control in large portions of rural northwestern Pakistan, where they killed hundreds of Shi'a civilians, imposed a harsh, Taliban-style of justice, and displaced Shi'a, Sikh, Hindu, and other minority populations. Jizya (the traditional tax on non-Muslims under Islamic law) was imposed on Sikhs and Hindus and violence was threatened for non-compliance. Sunni extremists destroyed shrines and tombs with religious or cultural significance to other Muslims, notably the shrine of revered Pashtun poet and Sufi mystic Rahman Baba, which was bombed in March 2009.' **[53a] (p93)**

8.75 Amnesty International noted in its report, "The Hands Of Cruelty" Abuses by Armed Forces and Taliban in Pakistan's Tribal Areas', published 13 December 2013, that:

'The Taliban continue to commit a range of human rights abuses, from the brutal killing of captured soldiers and accused spies to indiscriminate attacks that have killed and injured thousands across Pakistan. In areas where they retain effective control, the group continues to perpetrate unlawful killing, following quasi-judicial proceedings or with no proceedings whatsoever, including of captured Armed Forces personnel and those accused of spying. These execution-style killings violate international humanitarian law and are an abuse of the right to life. Taliban quasi-judicial proceedings

also fail to meet even the most basic requirements of fair trial under international human rights standards and international humanitarian law.’ **[13j] (p9)**

- 8.76 The USCIRF Report 2013, published April 2013, covering events from 31 January 2012 to 31 January 2013, gave examples of sectarian or religiously motivated violence, and stated ‘... armed extremists, some with ties to banned militant groups, continued their attacks on religious minorities, including bombings, against Shi’a, Ahmadis, Christians, Hindus and others.’ **[53d] (p120)**

See also subsection [Sectarian violence](#) and the section on [Freedom of religion](#)

- 8.77 Minority Rights Group International (MRG) noted in its report on minorities in the NWFP, dated 11 August 2009, that ‘The Taliban have... used terror tactics to intimidate residents into supporting them.’ MRG further noted that ‘In addition to public executions and floggings, the Taliban have distributed videos of violent acts, such as beheadings, committed against civilians...’ **[88a] (p3)**

See also subsections [Khyber Pakhtunkhwa](#), [Federally Administered Tribal Areas](#) and [Militant activity](#) for detail on clashes between Taliban and government forces. For information on militant groups see [Annex C: Terrorist and extremist groups](#)

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Sectarian violence

- 8.78 Jane’s noted in its section on Non-State Armed Groups, updated 19 April 2012, that ‘Pakistan’s population is predominantly Sunni Muslim, but there are significant Shia minorities in some parts of the country. Periodically the Shia community has been subjected to violent attacks by the Sunni community, some of which have been reciprocated.’ **[1a] (Sectarian Groups)**

- 8.79 In its Executive Summary, updated 19 June 2013, Jane’s noted that:

‘Ethnic and sectarian violence has plagued Pakistan for almost two decades. For example, in the commercial hub of Karachi, resentment of commercially successful Mohajirs (Urdu-speaking migrants from India after partition), has fuelled violent conflict with non-Mohajirs, formerly local Sindhis but now mostly immigrant Pashtuns. Activists from the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), the Awami National Party (ANP) and the religious Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) party were among those killed in recent targeted killings. Mohajirs largely comprise the MQM party, which wields considerable influence in urban Sindh, especially Karachi. Ethnic polarisation is endemic in Karachi, with the city sharply divided between Sindhis, Balochis, Mohajirs, Pashtuns and Punjabis.... A spate of killings claimed 24 lives in mid-January 2011, forcing the PPP, which has a mostly Sindh base, to counsel restraint to its coalition partners, the Mohajir-backed MQM and Pashtun-backed Awami National Party (ANP). Tensions have historically been high between all these ethnic groups... On 28 May 2010, co-ordinated attacks on two separate Ahmadi mosques in Lahore left close to a 100 people dead, one of the deadliest sectarian attacks in recent years, highlighting how religiously polarised and conservative Pakistani society is.’ **[1a] (Communal and sectarian violence)**

- 8.80 The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Armed Conflict Database stated in its section on Pakistan (Sectarian violence), Military and Security Developments – Annual Report 2012, that:
- ‘Sectarian violence increased sharply and fatalities were over 50% higher than in 2011. The frequency and lethality of the attacks increased and serious measures by the Pakistani government to tackle sectarian violence in the country was markedly absent. Sunni militant groups targeted Shia communities in Karachi, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), Gilgit-Baltistan and Punjab regions. FATA areas witnessed increased sectarian attacks on Shias, especially in Kurram Agency.’ **[137a]**
- 8.81 Human Rights Watch reported on 5 September 2012 that ‘...attacks against ordinary Shia have increased dramatically in recent years... In 2012, at least 320 members of the Shia population have been killed in targeted attacks. Over 100 have been killed in Balochistan province, the majority from the Hazara community.’ **[7k]**
- 8.82 The South Asia Terrorism Portal noted in its South Asia Intelligence Review, dated 23 April 2012, that:
- ‘The idea of Shias as a “heretical” sect has become an entrenched dogma of mainstream Sunni politics in Pakistan. On April 18, 2012, National Assembly Standing Committee (NSC) during a meeting told the National Assembly Human Rights Committee (NAHRC) that more than 650 Shias in Quetta, the provincial capital of Balochistan, and 450 in the Dera Ismail Khan District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) were targeted and killed “recently” (no date was specified) though the statement was issued in the context of the Shia-Hazara killings between March 29 and April 17, 2012.)
- ‘According to partial data compiled by South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) there have been at least 772 incidents of sectarian violence in Pakistan from January 1, 2005, to April 22, 2012, which have claimed at least 2,175 lives [these are likely to be underestimates, as information flows from many of the conflict-ridden regions of Pakistan are severely restricted].’ **[61i] (Volume 10, No.42)**
- 8.83 The USCIRF Report 2013 cited that:
- ‘Militants and terrorist organizations targeted Shi’i processions and mosques with impunity during the reporting period [31 January 2012 to 31 January 2013]. Organizations such as Human Rights Watch put the number of Shi’a killed over the past year at over 400. Attacks occurred across Pakistan, but particularly large bombings occurred in the province of Balochistan. Information collected by USCIRF during the reporting period, which is not exhaustive, documented approximately 50 incidents of violent attacks causing death, as well as 10 different attacks with explosive devices or suicide bombers. Shi’i activists have referred to the level and severity of attacks as constituting genocide...
- ‘Many of the attacks were perpetrated either by LeJ [Lashkar-e-Jhangvi] or TTP. LeJ, which originated from Punjab province but has developed a nationwide network, has proclaimed its goal of “cleansing” Pakistan of Shi’a, who it believes are not true Muslims. The Pakistani Taliban has stated they are in a “war or beliefs” against Shi’a and will “continue attacking them”.’ **[53d] (p120-121)**
- 8.84 The HRCP Report 2012 stated, with regards to sectarian violence in 2012, that:

'... 202 sectarian-related terrorist attacks, perpetrated by banned sectarian groups, the TTP and groups affiliated with it claimed the lives of 537 people and caused injuries to 772 people. 531 people, mainly Shias, were killed in sectarian violence across the country. Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), a banned organisation, claimed responsibility for most of the attacks against the Shia community. More than 100 Shia Hazaras were killed in Balochistan alone. Bashir Ahmed Bilour, senior minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, was tragically killed along with eight other people when a suicide bomber struck at a political meeting in Peshawar on December 22. TTP claimed responsibility for the attack.' **[27b] (p62-63)**

- 8.85 The South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) provided statistics on sectarian violence in Pakistan from 1989 to 2013 (based on news reports), accessed 21 June 2013, and stated that in 2012 there were 507 deaths and 577 people injured in 173 sectarian incidents. Between 1 January 2013 and 16 June 2013, SATP recorded 58 sectarian incidents, 285 deaths and 422 people injured. **[61a] (Sectarian Violence in Pakistan)**
- 8.86 The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) accounted in its report, The State of Human Rights in Pakistan in 2011 (AHRC Report 2011), published 10 December 2011, on the assassination of 26 Shi'a pilgrims by members of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), 30 miles south of Quetta, Balochistan province. A further three Shi'a's were killed by unidentified gunmen as they travelled to the incident. **[52g] (p41)**
- 8.87 On 17 February 2012 a suicide bomber detonated his explosives outside a mosque in a Shia community in Kurram Agency, killing at least 26 people. Fazal Saeed, leader of a breakaway faction of the Pakistani Taliban, claimed responsibility for the attack, stating that the Shi'a community of Parachinar, Kurram's main town, were involved in activities against them. (Reuters, 17 February 2012) **[10e]**
- 8.88 On 28 February gunmen killed at least 18 Shi'a Muslim bus passengers in a sectarian attack in the northern Pakistani district of Kohistan, which borders the Swat valley. The attackers are reported to have checked the identity cards of all the passengers before removing the Shi'as and shooting them. (BBC News, 28 February 2012) **[35g]**

See also Freedom of Religion, Shi'a and Sunni Muslims: [Sectarian violence](#), and Political Affiliation: [Politically motivated violence](#)

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9. Security forces

- 9.01 The Amnesty International report 'As If Hell Fell On Me': The Human Rights Crisis in Northwest Pakistan, published 10 June 2010, stated:
- 'In its military operations, Pakistan has deployed a wide array of security forces, including army soldiers, Inter-Service Intelligence agents, tribal levies called lashkars (official tribal militias) and khassadars (tribal police), the Frontier Constabulary (an armed police force operating in FATA border areas), and the Frontier Corps (a paramilitary force). The army and Frontier Corps (FC) are the two forces with the primary responsibility for maintaining law and order in FATA.' **[13e] (p32)**
- 9.02 Amnesty International's Annual Report 2013, published 23 May 2013, covering 2012 events, stated 'Security forces continued to act with impunity and were accused of

widespread human rights violations, including arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, torture, deaths in custody and extrajudicial executions targeting political activists, journalists, and suspected members of armed groups. In the northwest tribal areas, the armed forces exploited new and old security laws to provide cover for these violations beyond the reach of the courts.’ **[13h] (Violations by security forces)**

- 9.03** The US Department of State Country Reports on Terrorism 2012 – Pakistan, published 30 May 2013, stated that ‘Pakistani security forces conducted counterterrorism operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and throughout the Federally Administered Tribal Areas that resulted in the detention or arrest of thousands of militants. Security forces intercepted large stockpiles of weapons and explosives, and discovered bomb-making facilities.’ **[3r] (Chapter 2: Country reports: South and Central Asia Overview)**

See also subsection: [Human rights violations by government forces](#)

Police

- 9.04** The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, stated that:

‘Police have primary internal security responsibilities for most of the country. By law control of local police falls under the Ministry of Interior. The Rangers are a paramilitary organization under the authority of the Ministry of Interior, with branches in Sindh and Punjab. The armed forces are responsible for external security. During the year there were times when the government assigned domestic security responsibilities to the armed forces.

‘The Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR) provide the framework for law and order in FATA. The FCR has long been criticized for several harsh and inhuman provisions, some of which were mitigated when President Zardari amended the FCR in August 2011. Major changes in the FCR related to banning the collective responsibility of a tribe, restricting the arbitrary nature of the powers of political agents or district coordination officers, and granting citizens the right to challenge the decisions of political agents in courts.

‘A political agent who reports to the president through the KP is responsible for implementing the FCR. In lieu of police, multiple law enforcement entities operated in FATA. These entities included the paramilitary Frontier Scouts, which report to the Ministry of Interior in peacetime and the army in times of conflict; the Frontier Constabulary, which patrols the area between FATA and KP; levies, which operate in FATA and report to the political agent; khassadars (hereditary tribal police), which help the political agent maintain order; and lashkars (tribal militias), which are convened by tribal leaders to deal with temporary law and order disturbances.

‘Police effectiveness varied greatly by district, ranging from reasonably good to ineffective. Some members of police committed human rights abuses or were responsive to political interests.’ **[3n] (Section 1d)**

See also Judiciary: [Frontier Crimes Regulation](#)

9.05 The Asia Society 'Report by the Independent Commission on Pakistan Police Reform', entitled 'Stabilizing Pakistan through Police Reform', (Asia Society Report), dated July 2012, stated:

'The police in Pakistan are perceived to be corrupt as a matter of course, and are thought to be largely, if not solely, responsible for the breakdown of law and order in the country and for the steady erosion of the criminal justice system. Apart from its effect on law and order, police corruption is also responsible for the weak prosecution of criminals, the failure of trial prisoners to appear in court, flawed court processing, and an alarmingly high rate of acquittal. Some have argued that police corruption merely reflects the corruption of Pakistani society at large. They contend that in a sea of corruption it is impossible to create islands of honesty and integrity...' **[138a] (p24)**

9.06 The USSD Report 2012 noted:

'Frequent failure to punish abuses contributed to a climate of impunity. Police and prison officials frequently used the threat of abuse to extort money from prisoners and their families. The inspectors general, district police officers, district nazims (chief elected officials of local governments), provincial interior or chief ministers, the federal interior minister, the prime minister, or courts can order internal investigations into abuses and order administrative sanctions. Executive branch and police officials can recommend, and the courts can order, criminal prosecution. These mechanisms were used occasionally.' **[3n] (Section 1d)**

9.07 The USSD Report 2012 added:

'There were improvements in police professionalism during the year. As in previous years, the Punjab provincial government conducted regular training in technical skills and protection of human rights for police at all levels. During the year police were active in thwarting attempts by protesters to reach foreign embassy property during protests against a film that protesters believed defamed the Prophet Muhammad. Unlike in previous years, police did not indiscriminately fire lethal weapons into the crowd.' **[3n] (Section 1d)**

9.08 However, the Asia Society Report stated 'The police in Pakistan have historically suffered from a poor reputation among a public that retains a highly negative view of its role and mission. As a result, there is little voluntary flow of vital information relating to human security from the public to the police. Mistrust of the police is so deeply embedded across all levels of society that citizens seldom reach out to them, even in times of crises.' **[138a] (p38)**

9.09 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) and the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) noted in its joint report, Police Organisations in Pakistan (HRCP/CHRI Report 2010), published May 2010, that in 2008 there were a total of 1,392 police stations across the country **(p23)** with a strength of nearly 325,000 officers. **[27f] (p33)**

9.10 Jane's noted in its section on Security and Foreign Forces, updated 17 April 2012, that, as estimated in 2011, the Pakistan police force's total strength was 354,000. The report noted:

'At present Pakistan has only about 354,000 police personnel for a population of 170 million and the mandated strength is rarely reached, especially in rural areas where

most criminal activity occur. It is estimated that Punjab, Pakistan's most populous province, has a 180,000-strong police force of which only 40,000 are permanently stationed in police stations. Lahore, with 10 million inhabitants, has only 25,000 police and Karachi, the city with the highest incidence of crime and with a population of more than 16 million, has around 29,000 police. The number of terrorist attacks against police has dramatically risen in recent years, from 113 in 2005 to around 2,000 in 2009. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police force lost 353 policemen in 2009 in terrorism-related incidents. In August 2010, the head of the Frontier Constabulary was one of the most senior security officials ever to be killed by militants in the country. Since May 2011 the Pakistani Taliban have launched numerous deadly attacks on police targets to avenge the killing of Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden. These include a suicide attack on a Frontier Corps training centre, killing at least 80 troops, and an execution-style killing of 16 policemen in Dir district.' **[1a] (Police)**

9.11 The Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN), a network of 42 civil society organisations working to foster democratic accountabilities in Pakistan, stated in a press release dated 20 February 2012, that FAFEN observers visited 131 police stations in 71 districts of the Punjab, Sindh and Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) during October and December 2011. The observers found that a number of sanctioned posts for male staff were vacant with only 3,114 positions out of 3,993 occupied in Punjab, 1,320 out of 1,905 filled in Sindh, and 49 out of 140 occupied in the ICT. All sanctioned posts for female staff were occupied at the police stations visited.' **[130b]**

9.12 Jane's noted that:

'Pakistan's four provincial police forces are independent entities that take orders from federal government on issues of national security only. Large conurbations maintain separate forces that fall within the provincial chain of command. There are no police in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of North West Frontier Province.

'Each force is headed by an inspector general whose deputies oversee police operations within specific provincial sectors. Inspector generals are directly accountable to the central Ministry of the Interior whereas all levels junior to that report to the provincial civil service. District superintendents are key figures in implementing the edicts of their superiors on a day-to-day basis.

'Pakistani police are regularly charged with quelling sectarian violence and investigating cases of religious intolerance. The police have been unable to stem the tide of targeted killings, especially of members of the minority Shia and Christian communities.

'The PSP [Police Service of Pakistan] is the career federal civil service body from which senior police officers are drawn. Junior officers are appointed by provincial governments. PSP cadres are assigned to serve with provincial governments or to central government bodies. Recruits are selected annually by examination, and the body's decent pay rates and prestige ensure that competition is keen. Successful candidates receive two years of training at the Police Training College in Sihala, near Islamabad, and are then assigned to duty. Postings and promotions are frequently subject to political interference.' **[1a] (Police)**

9.13 The FAFEN report dated 20 February 2012 observed that some Station House Officers (SHOs) expressed their dissatisfaction at understaffing, lack of logistical support, fuel, stationary, clean drinking water and electricity connections as well as low salaries and strenuous work hours. **[130b]**

9.14 Sify News reported on 18 November 2010 that:

‘A large number of police officials across Pakistan have been booked for rape and human rights violations in the last three years, says an official report submitted to the interior ministry. The report submitted by the National Police Bureau to the ministry of interior said that 78 police officials in Sindh province were involved in 91 cases – 61 in 2008, 22 in 2009 and eight till mid 2010. Though the year 2008 saw 61 cases of rape and human rights violations in Sindh involving 44 police officials, not a single official was sent to prison...’ [102a]

See also subsection: [Human rights violations by government forces](#)

For further information on the organisation of the Pakistan police see the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) and the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) joint report, [Police Organisations in Pakistan](#), published May 2010. [27f]

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Armed forces

- 9.15 The USSD Report 2012 observed that ‘The armed forces are responsible for external security. During the year there were times when the government assigned domestic security responsibilities to the armed forces.’ [3n] (Section 1d)
- 9.16 The total strength of Pakistan’s armed forces was recorded as 590,000 (520,000 Army, 45,000 Air Force and 25,000 Navy personnel), with 500,000 reservists. (Jane’s: Armed Forces, 18 May 2012) [1a] (Summary)
- 9.17 Jane’s noted in its section on the Army, updated 18 May 2012, that the Pakistan army ‘... is large, well trained, reasonably well equipped and senior leadership is of a high quality, although there is some evidence of dilution due to “rank creep”. There is no evidence of religious extremism among senior officers, largely due to tight monitoring of promotion and selection boards by successive army chiefs, although it appears there may be some extremists in junior ranks.’ (Summary) The report added that ‘Reserves are intended as individual replacements and reinforcements and training is minimal, being for a triennial three week period. Reservists, however, are drawn in the main from recent service-leavers, who remain liable for service to the age of 45 and have readily-employable skills.’ [1a] (Sustainment)
- 9.18 The USSD Report 2012 noted:
- ‘The Actions in Aid of Civil Power Regulation 2011, which came into force in June 2011, grants wide powers to the military. The regulation allegedly responded to the need for a permanent federal statute to regulate the armed forces and give them legal authority to handle detainees under civilian supervision when called upon by the government. Retroactive to 2008, the regulation empowers the KP governor in FATA and the KP government in PATA to direct the armed forces to intern suspected terrorists. Critics stated that the regulation violated the constitution because, among other things, it empowers the armed forces to occupy property, makes statements or depositions by military officers sufficient to convict an accused, and makes all evidence collected, received, or prepared by the interning authority admissible and dispositive of guilt. Others noted that the regulation establishes a legal framework where none previously

existed, prohibits the abuse or misuse of force by the military, and allows for more transparent treatment of detainees by requiring registration upon apprehension and providing a legal process for transfer of detainees from military to civilian authorities for prosecution. It also creates an appeals process for detainees and their relatives and, importantly, limits the powers of the armed forces in administering the regulation. Reports in November and December 2011 indicated that transfers of detainees had begun.’ **[3n] (Section 1d)**

See also Judiciary: [Military courts and the Army Act](#)

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Other government forces

9.19 Other government forces of Pakistan include the Border guards, consisting of the Frontier Corps (FC) with a total strength of 80,000, and Pakistan Rangers, total strength 44,000. The Pakistan Rangers are responsible for policing the border with India along with other internal security tasks as required. The FC is deployed along the border with Afghanistan under two commands – FC (NWFP [now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa]) and FC (Balochistan). (Jane’s, Security and Foreign Forces, 17 April 2012) **[1a]** Jane’s noted that:

‘...in recent years, particularly since the Pakistani Army was deployed to the tribal areas in 2003 - triggering an ongoing insurgency and a severe deterioration in the security situation - the FC (NWFP) has suffered from increased demoralisation, exacerbated by the lack of weaponry, equipment and adequate training. Indeed, the FC (NWFP) has borne the brunt of the fighting against fellow Pashtun Pakistani tribal militants and foreign Islamic militants over the past five years. There have been an increasing number of desertions from the FC, particularly following the insurgencies in South and North Waziristan agencies in the FATA between 2004 and 2006. In addition, more than 1,000 soldiers, both from the Pakistan Army and the FC, have been killed to date in the fighting in the tribal areas and in Swat district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa [formerly NWFP].

‘The Pakistani government has expanded the Frontier Corps and their role in fighting Islamist militants. The decision to upgrade the force was the result of extensive consultations between the governments of Pakistan and the United States, and came after an agreement to kick-start a multi-year effort to reinforce the FC.’ **[1a] (Border Guards)**

9.20 Other forces include the National Guard with 180,000 personnel and the Maritime Security Agency (Coast Guard), with 4,000 personnel. (Jane’s, Security and Foreign Forces, 17 April 2012) **[1a] (Security forces)**

9.21 The Amnesty International report ‘As If Hell Fell On Me’... stated:

‘In addition to the regular uniformed forces, tribal elders have formed tribal militias or lashkars (literally, “armies”). The institution of the tribal lashkar, originally a tribal irregular volunteer militia, has undergone a transformation during the past few years; it is not a permanent defence force but is an irregular force with a localized mission and hence not accustomed to being directed by a central authority for a sustained purpose. In many instances, tribes, frustrated at insurgent operations including unlawful killings, harassment, intimidation and displacement, set up lashkars for their protection. The

army, relying on the superior local knowledge of tribesmen, has of late encouraged and in some cases armed such militias to fight insurgents, in the FATA region as well as in NWFP. Lashkars have fought militants in several of the FATA's seven agencies; insurgents, in return, have targeted lashkar members and unlawfully killed anti-Taliban tribal elders who have ties to the lashkars as well as relatives of lashkar members.'

[13e] (p33)

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Intelligence agencies

9.22 Jane's noted in its Security and Foreign Forces section, updated 17 April 2012, that:

'Pakistan's three primary intelligence agencies are the Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), the Intelligence Bureau (IB) and the Military Intelligence (MI). While all three ostensibly exist to safeguard Pakistan's national security, such is the level of mistrust between them that this overarching goal is frequently lost among inter-agency tension. The MI and ISI deal primarily with military matters while IB focuses on internal affairs.

'In April 2009, the federal government established the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA), which has been given the responsibility of co-ordinating the work of all intelligence agencies. A former director general of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and highly experienced police officer, Tariq Pervez, was appointed as its head. However, Tariq Pervez stepped down in March 2011 after repeated attempts to pass the NACTA bill failed due to disagreements within the Ministry of the Interior. In June 2011, the Pakistani government transferred director general of the FIA, Malik Mohammad Iqbal, to head the NACTA. However, the NACTA still requires legislation to make the body fully functional and has been actively undermined by the ISI.'

[1a] (Intelligence agencies)

See also Judiciary: [Anti-Terrorism Act and courts](#)

9.23 Reporting on the size of the ISI, Reuters noted on 8 October 2010 that 'Its size is not publicly known but... is widely believed to employ tens of thousands of agents, with informers in many spheres of public life.' The same source reported that there was speculation by US defence officials that elements of the ISI were '... interacting improperly with the Taliban and other insurgent groups...' **[10d]**

9.24 In its country report for Pakistan, dated 15 March 2012, the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) stated that Lieutenant-General Zahir ul-Islam was appointed as the head of Pakistan's main intelligence agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). The EIU added:

'General ul-Islam takes over from Lieutenant-General Ahmed Shuja Pasha, who ran the ISI from 2008. Although the ISI officially reports to the prime minister, the head of the agency is considered the country's second most important military figure, after the army chief, a position that is currently held by General Ashfaq Kayani. General Kayani is said to have enjoyed a close relationship with General Pasha, which stood the latter in good stead, particularly when the ISI was rocked by a series of scandals in 2011. Tensions between the ISI and the US hit a new high last year following the killing by US special forces of Osama bin Laden, the founder and leader of the al-Qaida global terrorist

network, in Pakistan in May [2011]. In September the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff at the time, Admiral Mike Mullen, alleged that a pro-Taliban terrorist group operating out of Pakistan, the Haqqani network, was a “virtual arm” of the ISI.’ [2b]
(Political scene: A new head of the ISI is appointed)

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Human rights violations by government forces

- 9.25 Amnesty International noted in its report, “The Hands Of Cruelty” Abuses by Armed Forces and Taliban in Pakistan’s Tribal Areas’, published 13 December 2013, on the continued human rights abuses committed by Pakistan’s armed forces in Pakistan’s northwest tribal areas. The report noted:
- ‘Many of the men held by the Armed Forces are subjected to enforced disappearance, tortured or otherwise ill-treated while in custody. Some detainees do not survive and are returned to their families dead, or their corpses are dumped in remote parts of the Tribal Areas, without an effective investigation into the circumstances of their death, compensation for their relatives, or prosecution of those responsible. Detainees who are released alive and their families are threatened with dire consequences if they speak publicly about their treatment in detention.’ [13j] (p9)
- 9.26 The same source added that, as far as Amnesty International was aware ‘... no serving or retired member of Pakistan’s Armed Forces, law enforcement authorities, or intelligence services has been prosecuted for their alleged involvement in unlawful detentions, torture and other ill-treatment, or the unlawful killing of detainees in the Tribal Areas...’ [13j] (p9)
- 9.27 The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) stated in its report, ‘The State of Human Rights in Pakistan in 2011’ (AHRC Report 2011), published 10 December 2011, that ‘The situation of abductions, forced disappearances and extrajudicial killings has been prevalent not only in Balochistan but all through Pakistan and the government has done nothing to rein in the intelligence agencies believed to be responsible, despite overwhelming evidence that this is so.’ [52g] (p49)
- 9.28 Sify News reported on 18 November 2010 that:
- ‘A large number of police officials across Pakistan have been booked for rape and human rights violations in the last three years, says an official report submitted to the interior ministry. The report submitted by the National Police Bureau to the ministry of interior said that 78 police officials in Sindh province were involved in 91 cases – 61 in 2008, 22 in 2009 and eight till mid 2010. Though the year 2008 saw 61 cases of rape and human rights violations in Sindh involving 44 police officials, not a single official was sent to prison...’ [102a]
- 9.29 Human Rights Watch noted in its World Report 2013, published 31 January 2013, that ‘Abuses by Pakistani police, including extrajudicial killings... continued to be reported throughout the country in 2012.’ [7i]

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Arbitrary arrest and detention

9.30 The USSD Report 2012 observed:

'There were reports that authorities filed FIRs without supporting evidence to harass or intimidate detainees or did not file them when adequate evidence was provided unless the complainant paid a bribe. Individuals frequently had to pay bribes to visit a prisoner. Foreign diplomats could meet with prisoners when they appeared in court and could usually meet with citizens of their countries in prison, although government officials sometimes delayed access.

'There were reports that some police detained individuals arbitrarily without charge or on false charges to extort bribes for their release. There were reports that some police also detained relatives of wanted individuals to compel suspects to surrender...

'Police routinely did not seek a magistrate's approval for investigative detention and often held detainees without charge until a court challenged the detention. When requested, magistrates approved investigative detention without requiring further justification. In cases of insufficient evidence, police and magistrates sometimes colluded to issue new FIRs, thereby extending detention beyond the 14-day period.'

[3n] (Section 1d)

9.31 Human Rights Watch noted in its World Report 2013 (HRW World Report 2013), published 31 January 2013, covering 2012 events, that:

'Security forces routinely violated basic rights in the course of counterterrorism operations. Suspects were frequently detained without charge or were convicted without a fair trial. Thousands of suspected members of al Qaeda, the Taliban, and other armed groups – who were rounded up in a nationwide crackdown that began in 2009 in Swat and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas – remained in illegal military detention; few were prosecuted or produced before the courts. The army continued to deny lawyers, relatives, independent monitors, and humanitarian agency staff access to persons detained during military operations. Terrorism suspects, particularly in the Swat Valley, reportedly died inexplicably of "natural causes." However, lack of access to the detainees made independent verification of the cause of death impossible.' **[7i] (Militant attacks and counterterrorism)**

9.32 On 30 August 2012, the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, Amnesty International stated in an open letter to the Prime Minister of Pakistan, then Rajaz Pervez Ashraf, that:

'The promulgation of the Actions (in Aid of Civil Power) Regulations (AACPR) in June 2011 has further undermined the protection of human rights in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. These regulations give sweeping, retrospective powers to the security forces to arbitrarily detain individuals and allow for the imposition of the death penalty for a number of vaguely and broadly defined offences with virtually no independent oversight.

'In practice, detainees have almost no access to effective judicial remedies. They are rarely, if ever, granted access to their families or a lawyer and frequently remain unaware of the charges, if any, against them or the grounds for their detention. Rules on evidence contained in the AACPR, which deem the testimony of Pakistan armed forces

personnel to be conclusive, violate the presumption of innocence and an individual's right to a fair trial.' [13k]

See also Judiciary: [Fair trial](#), [Arrest and detention – legal rights](#) and [Death penalty](#)

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Torture

9.33 The USSD Report 2012 cited that:

'The constitution prohibits torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment, but there were reports that security forces, including the intelligence services, tortured and abused individuals in custody. The law has no specific section against torture; it sanctions "hurt" but does not mention punishing perpetrators of torture. At year's end the government had yet to legislate on torture provisions as provided under the UN Convention Against Torture, which it ratified in 2010.

'According to the AHRC [Asian Human Rights Commission], the absence of proper complaint centers and a particular section in the criminal code to define and prohibit torture contributed to the spread of such practices. The AHRC stated that there had been no serious effort by the government to make torture a crime and added that the state provided impunity to the perpetrators, who were mostly either police officers or members of the armed forces.

'SHARP [non-governmental organisation – Society for Human Rights and Prisoners' Aid] reported that police tortured persons in more than 9,300 cases, compared with 8,000 cases in 2011. SHARP and other human rights organizations reported that methods of torture included beating with batons and whips, burning with cigarettes, whipping the soles of feet, prolonged isolation, electric shock, denial of food or sleep, hanging upside down, and forced spreading of the legs with bar fetters. Torture occasionally resulted in death or serious injury. Observers noted the underreporting of torture throughout the country. There were reports that police personnel employed cruel and degrading treatment and punishment.' [3n] (Section 1c)

9.34 The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) observed in its report, The State of Human Rights in Pakistan in 2012 (AHRC Report 2012), published 10 December 2012, that:

'Torture remains endemic, widespread, and is typically accompanied by impunity in Pakistan. Extreme forms of torture continue to be documented in the country, including, inter alia: beatings with fists, sticks, and guns on different parts of the body, including the soles of the feet, face, and sexual organs; death threats and mock executions; strangulation and asphyxiation; prolonged shackling in painful positions; use of chilli-water in the eyes, throat and nose; exposure to extreme hot and cold temperatures; mutilation, including of sexual organs; and sexual violence, including rape. Torture is used by the military and intelligence agencies in the contexts of counter-terrorism and armed conflict, but is also widespread in routine investigations by the police.' [52n] (p5)

9.35 The same source added that 'Security forces and intelligence services are known to be operating "torture centers" in many of major cantonments across the country, which are often in or around major cities. The AHRC has evidence of around 50 such centers

currently in operation. The government has taken no action to close these centers.’
[52n] (p5)

- 9.36 The Asian Human Rights Commission, commenting on the speech made by Pakistan’s foreign minister, Ms. Rabbani Khar, at the UN Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on Pakistan, stated on 4 November 2012 that:

‘Due to the absence of a functioning criminal justice framework and weak prosecution, torture in custody and extrajudicial executions have increased rapidly in comparison with previous years. Every police station has its own private torture centres besides their lock ups. Every cantonment area of the armed forces runs at least one torture centre and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) offices have their “safe houses”. The Air Force and Navy also operates their torture cells. The AHRC has documented numerous cases in which these centres are positively identified, and the information sent to the authorities. But no actions followed to end these illegal and inhuman torture cells.’
[52m]

- 9.37 The HRCP Report 2009 stated:

‘The SC [Supreme Court] took suo motu notice of the appeal of the daughter of a Balochistan National Movement activist, Wahid Bakhsh, who had complained of torture in custody. On being produced in the court, Wahid Bakhsh declared that he had been kept in an Anti terrorist Force (ATF) torture cell where conditions of detention were worse than at the notorious Abu Gharaib jail in Iraq. The Chief Justice inquired whether these torture cells were run by the government and whether they existed across the country. The court was informed that the Balochistan Home Secretary had declared the ATF cell a sub-jail. At the same time, the court disposed of a suo motu notice regarding torture cells in Islamabad when the Islamabad Police told the court that there was no torture cell under Islamabad police’s control.’ **[27c] (p35)**

- 9.38 The HRCP Report 2010 stated on so-called torture cells that:

‘During suo motu hearing of a case of police torture on suspects outside a police station in Chiniot (Punjab) the Supreme Court directed the Punjab government to shut down private torture cells being run by police, make drastic changes in police training manuals, maintain strict discipline and hold senior police officers, including inspectors general, accountable. The court also sought from the Punjab police a comprehensive report containing affidavits from police officers that there were no private torture cells in their areas of jurisdiction.’ **[27e] (p48)**

- 9.39 The AHRC Report 2011 noted that the police were the main perpetrators of torture, and stated ‘... torture cases have to be reported to the police, therefore the police, being the main perpetrators of torture refuse to register the cases. This is the main reason why official data about the cases of torture is not available.’ **[52g] (p64)**

See also [Avenues of complaint](#)

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Extra-judicial killings

- 9.40 The Foreign and Commonwealth Office noted in its 2012 Human Rights and Democracy Report (FCO Report 2012), published 15 April 2013, that there continued to be reports of extrajudicial killings by the security forces, carried out with impunity. **[11e]**
- 9.41 Amnesty International's Annual Report 2013, published 23 May 2013, noted that 'Hundreds of unlawful killings, including extrajudicial executions and deaths in custody, were widely reported. They were most common in the northwest tribal areas, and Balochistan and Sindh provinces.' **[13h] (Unlawful killings)**
- 9.42 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) noted in its annual report, the 'State of Human Rights in 2012', published March 2013, that 'According to media monitoring by HRCP, 350 police encounters were reported from across the country in 2012 in which 403 suspects were killed. This was a perceptible rise from the 2011 figures that HRCP had monitored: 254 police encounters leading to the killing of 337 suspects.' **[27b] (p61)**
- 9.43 Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported on 13 July 2011 on the upsurge of unlawful killings of suspected militants and opposition figures in Balochistan by the military, intelligence agencies and the paramilitary Frontier Corps (FC). The report noted:
- 'Across Balochistan since January 2011, at least 150 people have been abducted and killed and their bodies abandoned – acts widely referred to as “kill and dump” operations, in which Pakistani security forces engaged in counterinsurgency operations may be responsible. Assailants have also carried out targeted killings of opposition leaders and activists. Human Rights Watch has extensively documented enforced disappearances by Pakistan's security forces in Balochistan, including several cases in which those “disappeared” have been found dead... While Baloch nationalist leaders and activists have long been targeted by the Pakistani security forces, since the beginning of 2011, human rights activists and academics critical of the military have also been killed...' **[7f]**
- Further information on killings in Balochistan by suspected militants can be found in the HRW report '[Their Future is at Stake: Attacks on Teachers and Schools in Pakistan's Balochistan Province](#)', dated 13 December 2010. **[7g]**
- 9.44 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) undertook a fact-finding mission to Balochistan from the 15-19 May 2012. Its findings, including disappearances, extrajudicial killings and killings by militants, were published in the HRCP report [Hopes, fears and alienation in Balochistan](#), published 6 August 2012. The report included a list of missing persons and missing persons found dead. **[27h]**
- See also Security situation: [Balochistan \(Baluchistan\)](#)
- 9.45 On 8 June 2011 an unarmed teenager was shot and killed by paramilitary forces in Karachi. The incident, caught on film and broadcast on national television, showed the teenager arguing with soldiers before they shot him in the leg leaving him to die of his injuries. On 29 June 2011 a Pakistani court charged six members of the Sindh Rangers and one civilian with murder. (BBC News, 29 June 2011) **[35a]**
- 9.46 On 12 August 2011, BBC News reported that a paramilitary soldier had been sentenced to death for the killing of the unarmed teenager. Six other men were sentenced to life imprisonment. **[35i]**

See also [Death penalty](#)

9.47 Reporting on so-called ‘police encounters’, whilst stipulating that it was not in a position to determine how many of the encounters were genuine and where the police had no option but to kill a person, the HRCP Report 2011 noted that:

‘Police encounters largely remained [a] euphemism for extrajudicial killings. Use of lethal force remained the defining characteristic of police encounters in 2011. According to media reports, one person was killed in a police encounter every 26 hours during the year. A police encounter occurred every 34 hours on average. In the year under review, at least 254 police encounters took place across the country. As many as 337 suspects were killed in these encounters and another 71 were injured. As in previous years, the number of suspects captured alive after encounters remained very low by comparison. As many as 117 suspects were arrested following police encounters in 2011. Fifty-seven policemen were killed and 98 were injured in these encounters. In as many as 142 encounters, in which neither a policeman was killed nor injured, as many as 237 suspects were killed and another 51 injured.’ **[27g] (p51-52)**

9.48 In its report ‘As If Hell Fell On Me’..., Amnesty International noted:

‘Shortly after internally displaced persons started returning to Malakand in mid-July in 2009 after the army regained control of most of this area, some 251 bodies of suspected militants were reportedly found in Swat, some hanging from poles with written notes attached to their bodies warning anyone supporting the Taleban of the same fate, some with torture marks and some with limbs tied together and bullet wounds in neck or head. The exact number of such killings, as well as the exact circumstances of most individual cases, is impossible to ascertain as the access of journalists and human rights activists is restricted. The HRCP said that in addition, at least two mass graves were found, including at least one in Kukarai village in Babozai tehsil and another in an area between Dewlai and Shah Dheri in Kabal tehsil. The HRCP said that witnesses to mass burials said at least in some cases the bodies appeared to be those of Taleban militants.’ **[13e] (p63-64)**

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Disappearances

9.49 On 30 August 2012, the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, Amnesty International (AI) stated in an open letter to the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Rajaz Pervez Ashraf, that:

‘The fate of thousands taken by state officials or those acting on their behalf, held out of sight and without charge, denied access to lawyers and loved ones, remains unknown to this day.

‘Pakistan’s armed forces, including their intelligence services and paramilitary forces officially under the authority of the executive, are the primary organ of the state accused of committing enforced disappearances. Pakistan’s Constitution lists a range of fundamental human rights protections, which together with Pakistan’s binding international human rights obligations prohibit the state or its agents from committing such violations. In practice, however, the armed forces act with very limited judicial or executive oversight.’ **[13k]**

9.50 Human Rights Watch (HRW) noted in its Universal Periodic Review – ‘UPR Submission April 2012’, published 3 May 2012, that Pakistan had failed to adhere to its commitment to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. HRW added:

‘In Balochistan, Human Rights Watch has documented how Pakistan’s security forces, particularly its intelligence agencies, targeted for enforced disappearance ethnic Baloch suspected of involvement in the Baloch nationalist movement. Abductions are carried out in broad daylight, often in busy public areas, and in the presence of multiple witnesses. Victims are taken away from shops and hotels, public buses, university campuses, homes, and places of work.

‘Victims of enforced disappearances in cases documented by Human Rights Watch are predominantly men in their mid-20s to mid-40s, although Human Rights Watch has also documented disappearances of three children and three instances of victims aged over 60 years. Most victims appear to have been targeted because of alleged participation in Baloch nationalist parties and movements. In several cases, people appeared to have been targeted because of their tribal affiliation, especially when a particular tribe, such as the Bugti or Mengal, was involved in fighting with Pakistan’s armed forces.’ [7j]

9.51 Amnesty International’s open letter to Prime Minister Rajaz Pervez Ashraf stated that, whilst it welcomed the establishment of the Commission of Enquiry on Enforced Disappearances in March 2010, to AI’s knowledge ‘... there has been no attempt by the Commission to systematically interview traced individuals to determine any patterns of enforced disappearance; to facilitate assistance to them or their families; provide protection to witnesses who have testified before it; or to investigate named organisations such as the intelligence agencies or other security forces or individuals accused of enforced disappearances.’ [13k]

9.52 The AI letter added:

‘Pakistan’s high courts have taken several positive steps to investigate the role of the armed forces, intelligence services and other law enforcement authorities in the disappearances crisis. But the courts too have failed to bring any named individuals to trial, even in those instances where strong prima facie evidence has been submitted by lawyers acting on behalf of the families of missing persons. As far as Amnesty International is aware, no member of state security forces and intelligence services has been prosecuted for alleged involvement in enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention, torture or killing except in the case of Sarfaraz Shah. In that case, the state acted only after widespread media coverage following the release of a video of members of the paramilitary Rangers shooting dead Sarfaraz Shah in Karachi in June last year.’ [13k]

9.53 The USSD Report 2012 noted:

‘Kidnappings and forced disappearances continued, with reports of disappearances in nearly all areas of the country. Some police and security forces held prisoners incommunicado and refused to disclose their location. Human rights organizations reported that many Sindhi and Baloch nationalists were among the missing, and there were reports of disappearances during the year in connection with the conflicts in FATA and KP...

'Nationalist political parties in Sindh Province, including JSQM [Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz], reported disappearances and claimed that some of their members were in the custody of the intelligence agencies.' **[3n] (Section 1b)**

9.54 Amnesty International noted in its report 'The Bitterest of Agonies' End Enforced Disappearances in Pakistan, published 30 August 2011, that:

'Since Pakistan became a key ally in the US-led "war on terror" in late 2001, hundreds of people accused of links to terrorist activity have been arbitrarily detained and held in secret facilities... Dozens of missing individuals have been transferred from US detention or have reappeared in Pakistan during the past 10 years, but the whereabouts of hundreds of others, possibly held in secret detention in Pakistan or other countries, remain unknown... The clandestine nature of the arrests and detentions makes it impossible to know exactly how many have been subjected to enforced disappearance... In 2010, the Ministry for the Interior admitted to 965 disappearance cases for which there was some record, although there are differing claims on figures made by families, human rights groups and the state, ranging from 200 to 7,000.' **[13i] (p2)**

9.55 The HRCP Report 2012 noted that 'The Supreme Court (SC) held hearings in Quetta and looked at the question of disappearances in Balochistan in a new petition regarding the overall situation in the province. However, the apex court did not hold any substantial hearing on a petition submitted by HRCP on behalf of hundreds of missing persons at the SC's principal seat in Islamabad.' **[27b] (p78-79)**

9.56 The same source added:

'HRCP was able to verify 87 cases of enforced disappearance occurring in 2012. In Balochistan, according to cases that HRCP could verify, 34 people were picked up in 2012 and 26 of them were traced or released. The rest remained missing. In Sindh, a total of 50 were picked up but all but four were traced or released. Reports of two people being picked up from Punjab (from Multan and Lahore) and one from FATA (Khyber Agency) were submitted to HRCP. All three remained missing. In the continuation of a disturbing trend, the bodies of at least 72 people who were reported to have gone missing were found in deserted places in 2012, all in Balochistan. Another 29 bodies found in the province in 2012 could not be identified. It was believed that some of them might also have been victims of enforced disappearance. Several dead bodies of missing persons were also recovered from Nowshera and Peshawar in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.' **[27b] (p79)**

9.57 The AHRC Report 2010 stated, with regards to the Commission of Enquiry, that:

'The Commission to probe missing person's cases has not investigated or taken as seriously the lists of 168 children and 148 women. Two lists of disappeared persons were released separately, one by Voice for Baloch Missing Persons (VBMP), an NGO [non-governmental organisation] which works to document the cases of missing persons from the area and the other by the Provincial Interior Ministry of Balochistan. The missing people have allegedly been taken by Pakistani intelligence agencies for interrogation over their alleged link to Balochistan separatists and other militant groups in the country.' **[52e] (p35)**

See also Children: [Childcare and protection](#)

- 9.58 Amnesty International noted in its report ‘The Bitterest of Agonies...’, that, at the Commission of Enquiry ‘There are no witness protection mechanisms in place, and relatives are often required to give information at the Commission in front of representatives of the same agencies they accuse of involvement in the disappearances of their loved ones.’ **[13i] (p7)**
- 9.59 Human Rights Watch (HRW) stated in its report ‘We can torture, kill, or keep you for years’: Enforced Disappearances by Pakistan Security Forces in Balochistan, published 25 July 2011, that:
- ‘The practice of enforced disappearances by state security forces has become a distinctive feature of the conflict in Balochistan. It continues unabated to the present.
- ‘The exact number of new “disappearances” perpetrated in recent years by Pakistan’s security forces in the province remains unknown. Baloch nationalists claim “thousands” of cases. Balochistan provincial authorities on several occasions have cited the figure of about 1,000 enforced disappearances. Pakistan’s Interior Ministry has said that 1,102 Baloch were forcibly disappeared during General Musharraf’s rule, which ended in August 2008. Many cases remain unreported as families and witnesses often prefer not to report cases to the authorities or human rights organizations because of fear of retaliation by the authorities.’ **[7a] (p6)**
- 9.60 The HRW report added that it had ‘... collected information on “disappearances” that repeatedly implicates Pakistan’s intelligence agencies and Frontier Corps, often acting in conjunction with local police.’ **[7a] (p6)**
- 9.61 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) undertook a fact-finding mission to Balochistan from the 15-19 May 2012. Its findings, including disappearances, extrajudicial killings and killings by militants, were published in the HRCP report Hopes, fears and alienation in Balochistan, published 6 August 2012. The report included a list of missing persons and missing persons found dead. **[27h]**
- See also subsection Extrajudicial killings and sections on Judiciary and Security situation: Balochistan (Baluchistan)
- 9.62 The AHRC Report 2010 also reported on disappearances in Pakistan Administered Kashmir (Azad Kashmir), allegedly at the hands of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). The report stated:
- ‘The intelligence agencies particularly, the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI), is accused of training and sending people inside Indian held Kashmir for the Jihad or providing information of militants working inside other parts of Kashmir. The family members of the disappeared people are also stating that when people who worked for intelligence agencies leave the Jihad and return to their normal lives they are nabbed by the ISI and shifted to unknown places as punishment for not working in the interests of national security.’ **[52e] (p45-46)**

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Avenues of complaint

- 9.63 The HRCP/CHRI Report 2010 noted with regards to complaints against the police, that:

'In the event that a police officer does not fulfil his/her duties, or engages in active wrongdoing, the average citizen has some avenues of recourse. First, a citizen can lodge a complaint with the concerned police department as every provincial police establishment has some form of internal disciplinary proceeding...

'To this end, the Police Order, 2002 (and its subsequent amendments) created accountability mechanisms at the district, provincial and national levels. In regards to the district level, the Police Order established the District Public Safety and Police Complaints Commission (DPSPCC). The main responsibilities of the DPSPCC include: approve the Local Policing Plan; "take steps to prevent the police from engaging in any unlawful activity arising out of compliance with unlawful or mala fide orders"; cause registration of FIR within 48 hours when warranted; hear complaints; conduct fact-finding; and refer a matter to the Provincial Public Safety and Police Complaints Commission if the Head of District Police does not act on the matter. A significant problem with DPSPCCs is that very few have been set up throughout Pakistan and when they have been set up, they have little impact since their powers are often merely recommendatory and not binding. The failure of these bodies to have "teeth" means that they are often ignored.' **[27f] (p30, Section 2.6)**

9.64 The USSD Report 2012 cited that:

'Police and prison officials frequently used the threat of abuse to extort money from prisoners and their families. The inspectors general, district police officers, district nazims (chief elected officials of local governments), provincial interior or chief ministers, the federal interior minister, the prime minister, or courts can order internal investigations into abuses and order administrative sanctions. Executive branch and police officials can recommend, and the courts can order, criminal prosecution. These mechanisms were used occasionally. The court system remained the only means available to investigate abuses by security forces.' **[3n] (Section 1d)**

9.65 The same source stated:

'Persons may petition the courts to seek redress for various human rights violations, and courts often took such actions. Individuals may seek redress in civil courts against government officials, including on grounds of denial of human rights in civil courts. Observers reported that civil courts seldom, if ever, issued official judgments in such cases, and most cases were settled out of court. Although there were no official procedures for administrative redress, informal reparations were common.' **[3n] (Section 1e)**

9.66 The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) noted in a statement dated 24 June 2011 that there was no means of protection for witnesses of torture by the armed forces, therefore discouraging victims of such from making complaints. AHRC added that '... in claims against torture, victims bear the burden of proof, and there are no independent investigating agencies that are empowered to inquire into a complaint against torture.' **[52f]**

9.67 The same source added 'The absence of proper complaint centres and no particular law to criminalise torture makes the menace of torture wide spread. The torture cases have to be reported to the police, therefore the police, being the main perpetrators of torture refuse to register the cases. This is the main reason why official data about the cases of torture is not available.' **[52f]**

- 9.68 Amnesty International noted in its report 'The Bitterest of Agonies...' that, at the Commission of Enquiry (for disappearances) 'There are no witness protection mechanisms in place, and relatives are often required to give information at the Commission in front of representatives of the same agencies they accuse of involvement in the disappearances of their loved ones.' **[13i] (p7)**

See also subsection: [Torture](#), and Corruption: [National Accountability Bureau \(NAB\)](#)

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10. Military service

- 10.01 Child Soldiers International (formerly The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers) Global Report 2008 on Pakistan, covering the period between April 2004 and October 2007, reported that:

'The 1952 Pakistan Army Act allowed compulsory military service to be introduced in times of emergency, but this provision had not been used. Under Article 39 of the 1973 constitution, 'The State shall enable people from all parts of Pakistan to participate in the Armed Forces of Pakistan.' The Pakistan National Service Ordinance of 1970 stated that officers and jawans (soldiers) could be recruited between the ages of 17 and 23, and had to have at least a year's training before taking part in active service.' **[33]**

- 10.02 The CIA World Factbook, last updated 16 April 2013, accessed 1 May 2013, stated that soldiers could not be sent into combat until they were 18 years of age. **[4a] (Military)** The US Department of Labor's 2011 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor, released 26 September 2012, stated that 'There are reports of children being used by non-state militant groups in armed conflict...' **[91] (p478)**

- 10.03 The US Department of State's International Religious Freedom Report for 2012 (USSD IRF Report 2012), published 20 May 2013, noted that 'Members of minority religious groups volunteered for military service in small numbers, and there were no official obstacles to their advancement; however, in practice non-Muslims rarely rose above the rank of colonel and were not assigned to politically sensitive positions. A chaplaincy corps provided services for Muslim soldiers, but no similar services were available for religious minorities.' **[3k] (Section II)**

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11. Judiciary

Organisation

- 11.01 The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) World Factbook, updated 16 April 2013, accessed 1 May 2013, stated that Pakistan's legal system is based on a common law system with Islamic law influence. **[4a] (Government: Legal system)**
- 11.02 The US Department of State (USSD) Background Note on Pakistan, updated 6 October 2010, noted that:

'The judicial system comprises a Supreme Court, provincial high courts, and Federal Islamic (or Shari'a) Court. The Supreme Court is Pakistan's highest court. With the 18th Amendment now in place, the president names the most senior Supreme Court justice to be chief justice; also, the courts' and Parliament's influence are increased through a new judicial commission to oversee judges' appointments. Each province, as well as Islamabad, has a high court, the justices of which are appointed by the president after conferring with the chief justice of the Supreme Court and the provincial chief justice. The judiciary is proscribed from issuing any order contrary to the decisions of the president. Federal Sharia Court hears cases that primarily involve Sharia, or Islamic law. Legislation enacted in 1991 gave legal status to Sharia. Although Sharia was declared the law of the land, it did not replace the existing legal code.' **[3a]**

(Government and Political Organization)

- 11.03 The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, stated 'The jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and the high courts does not extend to several areas that operate under separate judicial systems. For example, Azad Kashmir has its own elected president, prime minister, legislature, and court system independent of the country's judiciary. Gilgit-Baltistan also has a separate judicial system.' **[3n] (Section 1e)**
- 11.04 The Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) noted in its report, The State of Pakistan's Children 2011 (SPARC Report 2011), published July 2012, that 'The long standing demand of extending the jurisdiction of superior judiciary to FATA [Federally Administered Tribal Areas] has been ignored once again; national laws still require to be extended to FATA by the President and no legislation is automatically applicable in the area.' **[71b] (p.v)**
- 11.05 The Pakistani government website, accessed 20 May 2013, stated that the Supreme Court was at the 'apex' of the judicial system and:
- '...to the exclusion of every other Court in Pakistan, has the jurisdiction to pronounce declaratory judgements in any dispute between the Federal Government or a provincial government or between any two or more provincial governments...The Supreme Court, if it considers that a question of public importance, with reference to the enforcement of any of the Fundamental Rights ensured by the Constitution of Pakistan is involved, it has the power to make any appropriate order for the enforcement of fundamental rights...The Supreme Court has jurisdiction to hear and determine appeals from judgements, decrees, final orders or sentences passed by a High Court, the Federal Shariat Court and the Services Appellate Tribunals.' **[29c] (Supreme Court)**
- 11.06 The same source added that the Supreme Court's decisions are binding in principle and in law for all other courts. At the district level there are also 'Courts of District Judges' and 'Courts of Civil Judges' both dealing with civil cases, while criminal matters are heard in 'Courts of Sessions' and 'Courts of Magistrates'. Court of Sessions can hear cases punishable by death and those under the Hudood Ordinances. The Government website added that 'An appeal against the sentence passed by a Sessions Judge lies to the High Court and against the sentence passed by a Magistrate to the Sessions Judge if the term of sentence [sic] is up to four years, otherwise to the High Court.' **[29c] (High Court)**
- 11.07 The same source added that there are also Special Courts and Tribunals to deal with specific types of cases, which included:

‘Special Courts for Trial of Offences in Banks; Special Courts for Recovery of Bank Loans; Special courts under the Customs Act, Special Traffic Courts; Courts of Special Judges [sic] Anti-Corruption; Commercial Courts; Drug Courts; Labour Courts; Insurance Appellate Tribunal; Income Tax Appellate Tribunal and Services Tribunals. Appeals from the Special Courts lie to the High Courts, except in case of Labour Courts and Special Traffic Courts, which have separate forums of appeal. The Tribunals lie to the Supreme Court of Pakistan...Steps have been taken to overcome the problems of inordinate delays in dispensing justice and enormous cost involved in litigation- a legacy of the past...’ **[29c] (High Court)**

11.08 On bail and delays trials the same Government website added:

‘The Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, has been amended to grant automatic concession of release on bail to the under-trial prisoners, if the continuous period of their detention exceeds one year in case of offences not punishable with death and two years in case of offences punishable with death. It also made incumbent on the criminal courts to take into consideration the period of detention spent by the accused as an under-trial prisoner while awarding sentence. No fee is payable in criminal cases and for filing any petition before the Federal Shariat Court. Court fee in civil cases up to the value of Rs [Rupees] 25,000 has been abolished.’ **[29c] (High Court)**

11.09 The government source additionally noted that there is an Ombudsman overseeing the courts. The Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman):

‘... is appointed by the President of Pakistan, holds office for a period of four years. He is not eligible for any extension [sic] of tenure, or for re-appointment under any circumstances. He is assured of security of tenure and cannot be removed from office except on ground of misconduct or of physical or mental incapacity. Even these facts, at his request, can be determined by the Supreme Judicial Council. Further, his office is non-partisan and non-political...The chief purpose of the Wafaqi Mohtasib is to diagnose, investigate, redress and rectify any injustice done to a person through maladministration on the part of a Federal Agency or a Federal Government official. The primary objective of the office is to institutionalise a system for enforcing administrative accountability.’ **[29c] (Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman))**

11.10 The USSD Report 2009 noted:

‘Delays in justice in civil and criminal cases arose due to antiquated procedural rules, weak case management systems, costly litigation to keep a case moving in the system, and weak legal education. These problems undermined the right to effective remedy and the right to a fair and public hearing.

‘There are several court systems with overlapping and sometimes competing jurisdictions: criminal; civil and personal status; terrorism; commercial; family; military; and Shariat. The Federal Shariat Court, according to Article 203 of the constitution, is an appellate court that can examine and decide whether any law is repugnant to the teachings of Islam. The passage of the Women's Protection Act does not negate the possibility of the Federal Shariat Court hearing appeals in certain cases. The Federal Shariat Court could hear appeals of cases involving parts of the Hudood Ordinance not moved to the secular law provisions, including gambling, liquor possession and drinking, and fornication in the false promise of marriage.’ **[3b] (Section 1e)**

See also [Constitution](#)

Shariat Courts (Islamic law)

11.11 The USSD Report 2012 noted that:

‘Cases under the Hudood Ordinance (a law enacted in 1979 by the military ruler Zia-ul-Haq to implement a strict interpretation of Islamic law by enforcing punishments for extramarital sex, false accusation of extramarital sex, theft, and drinking of alcohol) are appealed first to the Federal Shariat Court (FSC). The Supreme Court has ruled that in cases in which a provincial high court decides in error to hear an appeal in a Hudood case, the shariat courts lack authority to review the provincial high court’s decision. The Supreme Court may bypass the Shariat Appellate Bench and assume jurisdiction in such appellate cases. The shariat courts may overturn legislation they judge inconsistent with Islamic tenets, but such cases are appealed to the Shariat Appellate Bench of the Supreme Court and ultimately may be heard by the full bench of the Supreme Court.’ **[3n] (Section 1e)**

11.12 The US Department of State’s International Religious Freedom Report for 2012, Pakistan (USSD IRF Report 2012), published 20 May 2013, stated that:

‘The judicial system encompasses several different court systems with overlapping and sometimes competing jurisdictions that reflect differences in civil, criminal, and Islamic jurisprudence. The Federal Shariat Court and the Sharia bench of the Supreme Court serve as appellate courts for certain convictions in criminal courts under the Hudood Ordinance (an ordinance enacted in 1979 to implement Islamic law), including those for rape, extramarital sex, alcohol, and gambling. The Federal Shariat Court exercises “revisional jurisdiction” (the power to review of its own accord cases in lower courts) that applies to Muslims and non-Muslims, in cases relating to Hudood laws. Non-Muslims are allowed to consult the Federal Shariat Court in other matters that affect them or violate their rights if they so choose.’ **[3k] (Section II)**

11.13 The USSD Report 2010 added:

‘There were many changes in PATA’s [Provincially Administered Tribal Areas] judicial administration during the year. PATA, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including parts of the former princely states of Swat, Dir, and Chitral, are governed under Sharia law. Due to the country’s military intervention in Swat, religious extremists and militants were no longer administering parallel judicial and administrative processes in the Malakand Division (which encompasses the district of Swat.) In addition, in 2009 the country’s parliament and president formally enacted the Nizam-e-Adl Regulation 2009. The interpretation and enforcement of the law was sufficiently flexible that it was criticized by the Taliban that was formerly located in Swat. Contrary to Taliban desires, judges were appointed from the existing cadre of the country’s judiciary and not from among “religious scholars”.

‘In combination with a new judicial policy originated by the Supreme Court, which provided strict time frames for the initiation of both criminal and civil prosecutions, as well as significant efforts by lawyers and judges to meet the new time lines, the backlog of cases in the Malakand Division was reduced dramatically, in some areas up to 90 percent. In turn this reduced the amount of time that accused individuals spent in jail without benefit of active court process.’ **[3g] (Section 1e)**

- 11.14 Reporting on the Nizam-e-Adl Regulation (NAR – Islamic law), the USSD IRF Report 2011 noted that ‘NAR implementation has been delayed due to military operations against militants... In January KP Chief Minister Ameer Haider Hoti inaugurated Darul Qaza (an appellate or revision court) in Swat as a step towards full implementation of the NAR. According to Hoti, 27,000 civil and 39,811 criminal cases were decided in 2009-10 under this law.’ **[3p] (Section II)**
- 11.15 The USCIRF Report 2013 noted that the NAR regulations remained in place and there was no effort to repeal them. **[53d] (p119)**
- 11.16 The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child noted in its concluding observations to reports submitted by Pakistan with regards to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), dated 19 October 2009, that it was:
- ‘...concerned that the revocation of all laws, instruments, customs or usages in large areas of NWFP and the imposition of sharia law, as set out in the Sharia Nizam-e-Adl Regulation of 2009, does not provide adequate guarantee for the implementation of the Convention. It is also concerned that some existing laws and regulations remain in conflict with principles and provisions of the Convention, in particular:
- ‘(a) The Frontier Crimes Regulation of 1901 which remains in force in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas; and
 - ‘(b) The Zina and Hadd Ordinances, despite their revision through the Prevention of Anti-Women Practices (Criminal Law Amendment) Act 2006.’ **[79c] (paragraph 10)**

See also subsections on [Hudood Ordinances](#), [Qisas and Diyat Ordinances](#), [Frontier Crimes Regulation \(FCR\)](#) and [Tribal Justice system](#) and the section on [Children](#)

Anti-Terrorism Act and courts

- 11.17 The USSD Report 2012 noted that:
- ‘The Anti-Terrorism Act allows the government to use special streamlined courts to try persons charged with violent crimes, terrorist activities, acts or speech designed to foment religious hatred, and crimes against the state. After arrest, suspects must be brought before the antiterrorism courts within seven working days, but the courts are free to extend the period. Human rights activists criticized the expedited parallel system, charging it was more vulnerable to political manipulation.’ **[3n] (Section 1e)**
- 11.18 The USSD Country Reports on Terrorism 2012 - Pakistan, published 30 May 2013, stated:
- ‘Pakistan's Anti-Terrorism Courts have a high acquittal rate. Witnesses routinely recant their statements or fail to appear because of threats against them and their families. In June, an Anti-Terrorism Court acquitted four men accused of assisting Faisal Shahzad, the TTP-trained militant who attempted to explode a car bomb in New York City's Times Square in 2010, claiming a lack of evidence. The court would not accept evidence collected by electronic surveillance. The Fair Trial Act, approved by parliament in December, will allow evidence obtained by electronic interception and surveillance to be

admitted as evidence in the courts system.’ **[3r] (Chapter 2. Country Reports: South and Central Asia Overview)**

11.19 The USSD Report 2012 stated that:

‘Antiterrorism courts had the discretion to deny bail for some charges if the court had reasonable grounds to believe the accused was guilty... Under the FCR in FATA and the Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA), security forces may restrict the activities of terrorism suspects, seize their assets for up to 48 hours, and detain them for as long as one year without charges. Human rights and international organizations reported that an unknown number of individuals allegedly affiliated with terrorist organizations were held indefinitely in preventive detention, tortured, and abused. In many cases these prisoners were held incommunicado and were not allowed prompt access to a lawyer of their choice; family members often were not allowed prompt access to detainees.’ **[3n] (Section 1d)**

11.20 The Freedom House Freedom in the World 2013 – Pakistan report, published 10 June 2013, noted that ‘Other parts of the judicial system, such as the antiterrorism courts, operate with limited due process rights.’ **[5a]**

11.21 The Pakistan Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Ordinance, 1999, accessed via the South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) on 24 June 2013, defines an act of terrorism and the penalties prescribed. **[61j]**

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Military courts and the Army Act

11.22 In Human Rights Watch’s report, *Destroying Legality: Pakistan’s crackdown on Lawyers and Judges*, published 19 December 2007, it was observed:

‘As part of his effort to institutionalize the military’s power even after a return to civilian rule, on November 10, 2007, Musharraf amended the 1952 Army Act to allow the military to try civilians for a wide range of offenses previously under the purview of the country’s civilian judiciary. These include offenses punishable under:

- the Explosive Substances Act, 1908;
- prejudicial conduct under the Security of Pakistan Act, 1952;
- the Pakistan Arms Ordinance, 1965; the Prevention of Anti-National Activities Act, 1974;
- the Anti-terrorism Act, 1997;
- several sections of the Pakistan Penal Code.

‘Under the amended Army Act civilians can now be tried in military courts for acts of treason, sedition and less specific offenses such as “giving statements conducive to public mischief”.’ **[7b]**

11.23 The same report added:

‘...trials of civilians conducted by special military courts under the amended law will not be public, investigations will be conducted by military officers, and rules of evidence and procedures prescribed by law and the constitution for civilian trials will not apply. While

the Pakistan security forces have long enjoyed impunity for serious abuses, the amendments to the Army Act will exacerbate the problem. First, by subjecting civilians to trial by military courts, family members of victims of military abuses will be even less willing to come forward than ever before. Secondly, the amendment to the Army Act making it retroactive to 2003 will permit the armed forces to claim as lawful the many illegal detentions for which it has been responsible in recent years. Before Musharraf dismissed Supreme Court justices and effectively took control of the Supreme Court, it was investigating some 400 cases of “disappearances.” While some of these cases concerned terrorism suspects, many involved political opponents of the government. The Supreme Court under Chief Justice Chaudhry publicly stated that it had overwhelming evidence that Pakistan’s intelligence agencies were illegally detaining terror suspects and other opponents and repeatedly urging the authorities to free such individuals or process them through the legal system. In response to pressure from the Supreme Court, scores of those who “disappeared” were freed, but threatened with re-arrest or worse if they spoke publicly of their ordeal.’ **[7b] (Amendments to Laws under Emergency Rule)**

- 11.24 An article in Opendemocracy entitled ‘Pakistan’s multi-faceted crisis’, dated 12 November 2007, noted that the amendment to the Army Act:

‘...make[s] it possible to court-martial civilians, which has been condemned across the political spectrum... While officials defended this amendment by pointing out the difficulty in obtaining convictions of terrorists under the present criminal laws, critics note that (among many other things) civilians can now be brought before a military tribunal for “giving statements conducive to public mischief”. This provision is open to such a wide interpretation that just about any of the thousands of lawyers, political activists and human-rights volunteers currently under arrest can be tried under it.’ **[78]**

- 11.25 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) annual report, the State of human rights 2010, published 14 April 2011, (HRCP Report 2010), noted with regards to court martials ‘The SC [Supreme Court] ruled (July 16) that it had no jurisdiction to hear appeals against courtmartial decisions. Two former army officers, Lt. Col Khalid Abbasi and Lt. Col. Abdul Ghafar Babar, had petitioned the court to hear their appeals against their removal from service following court-martial proceedings. The CJ told the petitioners’ counsel that it had already been decided that appeals of military personnel against court-martial decisions could not be heard.’ **[27e] (p54)**

Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR)

- 11.26 The USSD Report 2012 noted that there is a separate legal system for the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR), which:

‘... provide[s] the framework for law and order in FATA. The FCR has long been criticized for several harsh and inhuman provisions, some of which were mitigated when President Zardari amended the FCR in August 2011. Major changes in the FCR related to banning the collective responsibility of a tribe, restricting the arbitrary nature of the powers of political agents or district coordination officers, and granting citizens the right to challenge the decisions of political agents in courts. A political agent who reports to the president through the KP is responsible for implementing the FCR. In lieu of police, multiple law enforcement entities operated in FATA. These entities included the paramilitary Frontier Scouts, which report to the Ministry of Interior in peacetime and the army in times of conflict; the Frontier Constabulary, which patrols the area between FATA and KP; levies, which operate in FATA and report to the political agent;

khasadars (hereditary tribal police), which help the political agent maintain order; and lashkars (tribal militias), which are convened by tribal leaders to deal with temporary law and order disturbances.’ **[3n] (Section 1e)**

- 11.27 On 30 August 2012, the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, Amnesty International stated in an open letter to the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Rajaz Pervez Ashraf, with regard to the FCR reforms, that:

‘The reform package did not address the fact that FATA remains beyond the jurisdiction of the high courts and Pakistan’s federal and provincial parliaments, nor did it repeal or adequately reform the harsh, colonial-era Frontier Crimes Regulation... the continuing exclusion of FATA from the jurisdiction of the high courts to rule on the regular law and constitutional protections, and the failure to enforce these and binding international human rights law protections in Balochistan and other parts of the country is unacceptable. In addition, as with the case, for example, of the “Adiala 11”, the practice of transferring detainees from areas where the high courts have jurisdiction to enforce the constitutional protections, to FATA where they do not, appears to be an attempt by the intelligence agencies and other security forces to exploit this legal lacuna and avoid accountability for human rights violations such as enforced disappearances.’ **[13k]**

See also Security Situation: [Federally Administered Tribal Areas \(FATA\), Balochistan and Security forces: Disappearances](#)

- 11.28 Amnesty International noted in its report ‘As If Hell Fell On Me’: The Human Rights Crisis in Northwest Pakistan, published 10 June 2010, that:

‘Though Part II of the Constitution of Pakistan of 1973 lists a range of “fundamental rights”, Part XII explicitly excludes most or all of the legal, judicial and parliamentary system of Pakistan from FATA; articles 247(3) of the Constitution explicitly excludes FATA from all acts of the Pakistani parliament and Supreme Court, respectively. Instead these areas are effectively placed under the direct executive control of the President of Pakistan, while the Governor of the NWFP acts as the President’s representative. The President may make “regulations” with respect to “the peace and good governance” of FATA and specify which laws are or are not to be extended to FATA. Adult franchise was introduced in FATA in 1996; FATA representatives were elected on a non-party basis not to any FATA parliamentary body but to the National Assembly where they cannot exercise any legislative powers with regard to FATA. Interestingly, the President of Pakistan has the authority under the Constitution (article 247(6)) to end at any time the applicability of the FCR to any agency after consultation with a tribal jirga.

‘Under the FCR, the federal government – effectively, the President of Pakistan – appoints a Political Agent (PA) for each FATA agency who exercises extensive administrative, judicial and executive powers. In exercise of his judicial powers under the FCR, on vaguely-defined grounds he can order that individuals or entire communities be detained without trial for years at a time, seize their property, and impose fines, all without any requirement of ordinary criminal trial. Except in the case of procedural flaws, his decision is final: the FCR precludes appeal to any court outside FATA, as the jurisdiction of Pakistan’s higher judiciary is explicitly barred under Article 247(7) of the Pakistani constitution. Under Chapter III of the FCR, the PA may consult a Council of Elders (in practice a tribal jirga) to resolve disputes, including in criminal cases; such jirgas are traditionally made up of at least three maliks, all men appointed and dismissed by the PA on his subjective estimation as to whether the individual concerned adequately serves the interests of the region’ **[13e] (p26-27)**

11.29 The government website of the FATA, accessed 27 February 2012, stated ‘All civil and criminal cases in FATA are decided under the Frontier Crimes Regulation 1901 by a jirga (council of elders). Residents of the tribal areas may, however, approach the apex courts (Supreme Court of Pakistan and Peshawar High Court) with a constitutional writ challenging a decision issued under the 1901 Regulation.’ **[58a] (Administrative system)**

11.30 However, the International Crisis Group (ICG) reported that on 12 August 2011 President Zardari signed the extension of the Party Political Order (2002) to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). The ICG noted that the president also reportedly amended the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR):

‘... to require that a prisoner be produced before the authorities within 24 hours of arrest, and given the right to bail, something that was previously denied to tribal populations. The president’s spokesman said that FCR provisions that allow collective punishment of an entire tribe for crimes committed by a member or on their territory, would be “softened” – indicating that perhaps women, children and elderly will be exempt from the collective punishment clause, as proposed in 2009.’ **[20a]**

See also [Arrest and detention – legal rights](#)

11.31 In a recent case reported in the HRCP Report 2010 ‘The Peshawar High Court (March 11) ordered the release on bail of Moazzam Khan and Haji Wazir Khan who were being detained in two separate cases under the collective responsibility provision of the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR).’ The HRCP noted:

‘The issues framed by the court were: “whether inmates of tribal area are recognized as human beings by the constitution and as such the fundamental rights guaranteed by it have been given to them; whether violation of such rights is amenable to the constitutional jurisdiction of this court, whether the tribal area has been declared as conflict zones where armed forces are acting in aid of civil administration and whether in view of the provision contained in Article 245 of the constitution the high court can step in if and when such rights are violated”. The court came to the conclusion that it had a constitutional obligation to step in to ensure obedience to the constitution and the law.’ **[27e] (p60)**

See also subsections [Shariat Courts \(Islamic law\)](#), [Tribal Justice system](#) and Section: [Security situation](#)

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Tribal Justice System – Jirgas

11.32 On 6 August 2012 the UN General Assembly reproduced Pakistan’s ‘National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21’, for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated:

‘Traditional jirgas play an important role in peaceful settlement of small disputes at the village level. There have been cases where the jirgas have overstepped their authority and taken decisions on criminal matters, which do not fall within their mandate. The Government takes punitive action against members of jirgas when these take illegal

action or make decision that infringe on human rights. The courts have taken serious notice of these illegal decisions and nullified such verdicts.

'In April 2004, Sindh High Court imposed a ban on holding jirgas in the province. In 2008, the Sindh Government issued directives to all District Police Officers to ensure a complete ban on holding illegal jirgas and arresting those involved. Follow-up implementation has had mixed results. Despite the verdict of the Sindh High Court there have been reports of illegal jirgas being held in some parts of the country.' **[83b] (paragraph 51-52)**

- 11.33 The Asian Human Rights Commission, commenting on the speech made by Pakistan's foreign minister, Ms. Rabbani Khar, at the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on Pakistan, stated on 4 November 2012 that an area the government failed to act upon was:

'... the Jirgas that are held illegally and are used to humiliate, punish and control women. No action is taken when these councils declare a couple karo-kari that leads to honour killings. Likewise, the government does nothing to prevent the exchange of minor girls as compensation so settle family feuds. It is evident that government ministers and politicians are heavily involved in the running of Jirgas and have a vested interest in allowing them to continue. This goes a long way to explain as to why the Bill against domestic violence has been pending in parliament since 2009.' **[52m]**

- 11.34 The USSD Report 2012 noted:

'Informal justice systems lacking the legal protections of institutionalized justice systems continued, especially in rural areas, and often resulted in human rights violations. Feudal landlords and other community leaders in Sindh and Punjab, and tribal leaders in Pashtun and Baloch areas, continued to hold local council meetings (known as panchayats or jirgas), at times in defiance of the established legal system. Such councils settled feuds and imposed tribal penalties on perceived wrongdoers, including fines, imprisonment, or at times the death penalty. Women often were sentenced to violent punishments or death for "honor"-related crimes... In Pashtun areas, primarily located in FATA, such councils were held under the outlines of the FCR. Assistant political agents, supported by tribal elders of their choosing, are legally responsible for justice in FATA and conduct hearings according to Islamic law and tribal custom. Under the pashtunwali code of conduct, a man, his family, and his tribe are obligated to take revenge for wrongs, real or perceived, to redeem their honor. Frequently disputes arose over women and land. They often resulted in violence.' **[3n] (Section 1e)**

- 11.35 The government website of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), accessed 27 February 2012, stated:

'FATA is divided into two administrative categories: "protected" areas are regions under the direct control of the government, while "non-protected" areas are administered indirectly through local tribes.

'In protected areas, criminal and civil cases are decided by political officers vested with judicial powers. After completing the necessary inquiries and investigations, cognizance of the case is taken and a jirga is constituted with the consent of the disputing parties. The case is then referred to the jirga, accompanied by terms of reference. The jirga hears the parties, examines evidence, conducts further inquiries where needed, and issues a verdict which may be split or unanimous. The political agent, or an official

appointed by the political agent for this purpose, examines the verdict in the presence of parties to the case and members of the jirga. If the verdict is found to be contrary to customary law or tainted with any irregularity, the case may be remanded to the same jirga for re-examination or the verdict may be rejected and a fresh jirga constituted. Where the verdict is held to be in accordance with customary law and free of irregularities, it is accepted and a decree is issued accordingly. An aggrieved party may challenge the decree before an appellate court, and a further appeal may be lodged with a tribunal consisting of the home secretary and law secretary of the federal or provincial government. Once appeals are exhausted, execution of the verdict is the responsibility of the political administration.

'In non-protected areas, cases are resolved through a local jirga at the agency level. Local mediators first intervene to achieve a truce (tiga) between parties in a criminal case, or to obtain security (muchalga) in cash or kind for civil disputes. Thereafter, parties must arrive at a consensus concerning the mode of settlement arbitration, riwaj (customary law) or Shariah (Islamic law). Once the mode of settlement is agreed upon, mediators arrange for the selection of a jirga with the consent of the parties to the case.

'Where arbitration is selected, a jirga is nominated by consensus and given an open mandate (waak), with the understanding that its decision will be accepted by all parties. Here, the decision of the jirga cannot be challenged. In cases decided according to customary law or the Shariah, however, an aggrieved party may challenge the jirga's decision before another jirga of their own choice. The new jirga does not hear the case afresh but only examines the original decision to see whether it deviates from customary law or the Shariah. Further appeal may be referred to a third jirga and its decision is final.

'Implementation of jirga decisions in non-protected areas is the responsibility of the tribe. The jirga may mete out punishment to an offender, imposing a heavy fine. Occasionally, more serious measures may be taken such as expelling an individual or a family from the area, and confiscating, destroying or setting fire to homes and property. In such cases, the entire tribe bands together as a lashkar (army) to enforce the decision.

'While most disputes are settled internally, more serious matters may require the calling of a larger jirga made up of maliks, elders, the political agent, members of the National Assembly and Senate, and occasionally even representatives from neighbouring agencies or FRs [Frontier Regions].' **[58a] (Administrative System)**

11.36 The AHRC Report 2010 observed that:

'... the federal and provincial Governments did not heed the higher judiciary's pronouncement of Jirgas and Panchayats to be illegal and parallel systems of "justice" and instructions to the Government to eradicate them, to punish those who participate in them, and to disallow their so-called judgements to be implemented (vide Sindh High Court and Supreme Court landmark judgements). This is still happening with total impunity all over the country, showing the Governments' lack of political will and commitment, a disregard for the sanctity of the Constitutional trichotomy of powers, and the helplessness of the law enforcement agencies and legal systems in the face of continuing arrogant political feudal and tribal patriarchal dispensations.' **[52e] (p78)**

- 11.37 The HRCP Report 2010 stated ‘Despite repeated orders of the superior courts the institution of the jirga survived, especially in the tribal areas and some parts of the four provinces.’ The report gave some examples of jirga ‘justice’ during 2010. **[27e] (p61)**
- 11.38 Dawn reported on 28 March 2012 that:
- ‘The Supreme Court issued orders on Tuesday [27 March] to the provincial chief secretaries and inspectors general [sic] of police to ensure that girls and women were not exchanged to settle disputes through jirgas.
- ‘A three-judge bench, headed by Chief Justice Iftikhar Mohammad Chaudhry, had taken up a petition of Chairperson of the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), Anis Haroon, against the jirga system and a case filed earlier by anthropologist Samar Minallah against the “swara” custom...
- ‘The chief secretaries and police chiefs were ordered to take measures against violation of Section 310A of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) by initiating action against members of jirgas and punchayats. The section was introduced in compliance with a Supreme Court order after 2006 to provide a maximum punishment of 10-year rigorous imprisonment for giving a woman or girl in marriage to settle a dispute.
- ‘In her petition, Ms Haroon said 87 jirgas were held in Sindh last year and 26 girls and women were exchanged for settling disputes. The district administrations did not appear to be interested in taking action against violators of women’s fundamental rights.’ **[42b]**
- 11.39 The USSD Report 2010 cited ‘In specific areas noted in the Nizam-e-Adl regulation (often informally called the Sharia law) in PATA [Provincially Administered Tribal Areas], Sharia law is imposed, and judges, known as qazis, are assisted by religious scholars...’ **[3g] (Section 1e)**
- 11.40 The Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child report, The State of Pakistan’s Children 2008, published May 2009 (SPARC Report 2008), stated that:
- ‘The jirga system is a constitutionally recognised parallel judiciary. It is operational in the FATA and is controlled by the Frontier Crime Regulations (FCR). The Constitution of Pakistan acknowledges these “Jirgas” as substitutes for the Supreme and High Courts, meaning that the judiciary or judicial systems and the laws applicable to the rest of the country are not available to them. Pakistan is a semi-feudal society, with powerful feudal lords. The supreme heads of the communities (Biradarries) make their own laws, their own system of justice (jirgas and panchayats) in which honour is perceived differently from the formal laws. In Pakistan, the Jirga system operates at the informal level in all the four provinces of Pakistan. Some of the features of its operation might differ from the Jirgas in other parts of the country but the principles and structures follow the same pattern. Its deep impact and influence is also felt in the cities, which are, extensions and composites of the rural settings.’ **[71c] (p36)**
- 11.41 The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) noted in its report, The State of Human Rights in Pakistan – 2008 (AHRC Report 2008), published 11 December 2008, that:
- ‘In a tribal court, witnesses and hearsay are the primary form of evidence and a verdict often rests on the reputation or power of a witness. Women are automatically considered sexually corrupt and their testimonies carry little weight. During a session spectators will gather and they tend to pick a side, after which they will heckle and

pressure the decision makers. Needless to say, the most popular verdict may not always be a just one; it is difficult to reconcile justice with the will of an over-excited mob. Superstition also comes into play. In certain cases defendants have been told to walk on hot coals and if they feel and show no pain, then they are innocent...’ **[52b] (p16)**

11.42 In its report, Pakistan: The tribal justice system, dated 30 July 2002, Amnesty International noted:

‘Tribal jirgas [literally: meeting; faislo, a Sindhi term for both the meeting and the decision; panchayat, council of elders] consisting of elders of the tribe and headed by the sardar [head of a tribe] or, if the dispute is of less importance, local heads of the tribe, can either be called on an ad hoc basis or take place regularly. They deal with a range of issues, including conflicting claims to land and water, inheritance, alleged breaches of the “honour” code and intra-tribal or inter-tribal killings. Many sardars or lower tribal leaders hold regular “adjudication” days which are widely known and attended by people with a variety of complaints. Sardars have no formal training in “adjudication”; sardars have told Amnesty International that they had learned how to conduct jirgas from their fathers; one sardar said, “It’s all in my head, there is no need to codify it ... I have my own intelligence to tell me what is just”. Others have claimed that while not codified, the principles of tribal justice are well defined.’ **[13b] (p7, The jirga or faislo or panchayat system)**

11.43 The report continued:

‘A jirga can be initiated by a sardar who is aware of a feud and calls on the persons involved to submit to a jirga or by a complainant who approaches the sardar. On some cases the sardar alone will decide issues but major conflicts are brought before an assembly of elders. Both the complainant and the accused have to agree to appear before the jirga and to submit to their decision. Proponents of the system have described it as democratic: “A democratic system prevails among the tribes. People only come to the sardar if both parties agree ... if the sardar is a respected person, people will come to him for resolution of conflicts”, a sardar told Amnesty International.

‘Proceedings begin by the complainant presenting his case and the other party then responding. Unlike in the formal judicial system in Pakistan which in some cases allows for trial in absentia, in the tribal system, the accused has to be present in person and present their case in person. In some cases, jirgas have been postponed when the accused did not present themselves...’ **[13b] (p6, The process of jirga)**

11.44 The same source noted that:

‘During the “trial”, all the people involved usually stay at the place of “trial” as guests of the presiding person. “We give the hospitality and telephones and food ... but we don’t charge anything for our service”, a tribal sardar told Amnesty International, acknowledging, however, that some tribal leaders are now asking for a fee. While generally “proceedings” do not cost the “litigants” anything, sardars taking fees are seen by many observers as an indicator of the decline of the system. A former Commissioner of Larkana division, Aslam Sindhrani, pointed out to Amnesty International that sardars draw monetary benefit from holding jirgas besides benefits to their status.’ **[13b] (p6, The process of jirga)**

11.45 The USSD Report 2012 noted that ‘The traditional settling of family feuds in tribal areas, particularly those involving killing, could result in giving daughters of the accused in marriage to the bereaved. Many tribal councils instituted harsh punishments, such as the death penalty, “honor killings,” or watta-satta marriages (exchange of brides between clans or tribes).’ **[3n] (Section 1e)**

11.46 Amnesty International noted in its report ‘As If Hell Fell On Me’: The Human Rights Crisis in Northwest Pakistan, published 10 June 2010, that:

‘Some of the “tribunals” established by the Taleban in FATA were mobile while others permanent. Cases were often adjudicated by two qazis, or judges, appointed by the Taleban who were supposed to be learned scholars in Shari’ a. In reality, locals questioned the knowledge of the qazis; in any case, their “trial” procedures and methods of punishment were lacking in any legal basis, were arbitrary, discriminatory, and unfair, and clear abuse of the internationally-recognised human rights of those brought before them.’ **[13e] (p43)**

11.47 The AHRC Report 2009 stated that ‘More than 4000 people have died in Jirga-sanctified murders over the last six years, and two thirds of them have been women. Their deaths have often occurred under the most barbaric of circumstances. Many are charged with having a relationship outside of their marriages (an often fabricated claim,) while others are suspected of planning love marriages, as opposed to the arranged marriages planned by their families.’ **[52a] (p207)**

See also Women: [Love marriages](#)

11.48 The same source added:

‘In one recent case involving a Jirga, an 18-year old girl, trafficked to a family through marriage, was raped repeatedly by her father-in-law and other male members of the family. After she managed to escape, a Jirga was held and it was ordered that the girl be returned to her parents. However, a second Jirga ordered that she be returned to her husband and his family on the grounds that the girl’s parents had taken money for the marriage of the girl. With the order of the Jirga, the girl was kidnapped on October 21, 2008 and her whereabouts remain unknown. The nephew of a provincial minister was reportedly involved in conducting the Jirga, and because of his involvement, the police are unwilling to take action. The involvement of ministers in the Jirga system demonstrates that the confluence of this illegal court system with the supposedly higher, established legal system speaks to the failure of Pakistan’s legal system, through, and at the hands of its politicians and judges. In maintaining two legal systems, which are used at whim for personal gain, the pursuit of justice is rendered entirely impossible.’ **[52a] (p208)**

11.49 On 1 September 2008, The Telegraph reported on the defence of a jirga judgement by one of Pakistan’s legislators. The report noted:

‘A Pakistani politician has defended a decision to bury five women alive because they wanted to choose their own husbands. Israr Ullah Zehri, who represents Baluchistan province, told a stunned parliament that northwestern tribesman had done nothing wrong in first shooting the women and then dumping them in a ditch. “These are centuries-old traditions, and I will continue to defend them,” he said. “Only those who indulge in immoral acts should be afraid.” The women, three of whom were teenagers and whose “crime” was that they wished to choose who to marry, were still breathing as

mud and stones were shoveled over their bodies, according to Human Rights Watch.’
[104a]

The [Asian Human Rights Commission](#) (AHRC) provided further information on the above incident. [52d]

See also Section Women: [Honour killings](#)

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Independence

- 11.50 The USSD Report 2012 noted ‘The law provides for an independent judiciary, but the judiciary often was subject to external influences, such as fear of reprisal in terrorism cases. In nonpolitical cases the media and the public generally considered the high courts and the Supreme Court credible.’ [3n] (Section 1e)
- 11.51 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan stated in its report, ‘State of Human Rights in 2011’ (HRCP Report 2011), published March 2012, that:
- ‘Administration of justice in 2011 was overshadowed by what is often described as judiciary’s activism. The matters taken up by the Supreme Court, some on being raised by interested parties and some others in the exercise of its suo motu jurisdiction, dominated the public debate, especially the media space, to such an extent that the other courts and cases attracted little attention. Throughout the year it seemed as if in addition to its normal work the country’s apex judicial forum was also functioning as an ombudsman’s office, as an administrative court, as an anti-corruption tribunal, as a supreme investigation agency, and as the sole defender of not only the constitution but also of public morality.
- ‘While this expanded role gained the SC immense popularity, it also raised many questions regarding the impact of frequent and extensive invocation of suo motu powers on the court’s normal work, the difficulties in avoiding the side effects of selective justice, and the consequences of the executive-judiciary or parliament-judiciary confrontation.’ [27g] (p18-19)
- 11.52 The AHRC Report 2010 noted ‘...in some cases the government was hesitant to implement the decisions of the Supreme Court.’ However, despite being in dispute with the government at times, the judiciary ‘asserted its independence from the executive.’ [52e] (p1)
- 11.53 The Freedom in the World 2013 – Pakistan report cited that:
- ‘Provisions of the 18th Amendment granted power over judicial appointments to a judicial commission rather than the president, and the 19th Amendment further strengthened the role of the chief justice and other senior judges in the commission and appointments process. However, tensions between the judiciary and the executive persisted in 2012. The Supreme Court continued to push for the revival of corruption cases against Zardari and engaged in activism in politically popular cases concerning blasphemy and economic policy. Observers voiced concern that the judiciary was becoming increasingly close to the army, supporting its agenda while trying to undermine the executive.’ [5a]

11.54 The HRCP Report 2011 noted that ‘A large number of the cases taken up by the SC on urgent basis dealt with corruption in government offices, wrongful appointments and transfers and government’s reluctance or inability to respect court orders. Throughout the year the executive and the judiciary appeared to be in a state of confrontation with each other, despite repeated denials from both sides and occasional exchange of courtesies between them.’ **[27g] (p19)**

See also [Corruption](#) and [Freedom of speech and media](#)

Fair trial

11.55 The USSD Report 2012 cited that:

‘The civil, criminal, and family court systems provide for public trial, presumption of innocence, cross-examination by an attorney, and appeal of sentences. There are no trials by jury. Although defendants have the right to be present and consult with an attorney, courts appointed attorneys for indigents only in capital cases. Defendants bear the cost of legal representation in lower courts, but a lawyer can be provided at public expense in appellate courts. Defendants can confront or question witnesses brought by the prosecution and present witnesses and evidence on their behalf. Defendants and attorneys have legal access to government-held evidence relevant to their cases. Due to the limited number of judges, a heavy backlog of cases, lengthy court procedures, frequent adjournment, and political pressure, cases routinely lasted for years, and defendants had to make frequent court appearances.’ **[3n] (Section 1e)**

11.56 The same source added ‘There were extensive case backlogs in the lower and superior courts, as well as other problems that undermined the right to effective remedy and the right to a fair and public hearing. According to Chief Justice Chaudhry, more than 1.6 million cases were pending in the district and the superior courts as of August [2012]. Delays in justice in civil and criminal cases were due to antiquated procedural rules, weak case management systems, costly litigation, and weak legal education.’ **[3n] (Section 1e)**

11.57 The USSD Report 2012 also noted ‘Many lower courts remained corrupt, inefficient, and subject to pressure from prominent wealthy, religious, and political figures. The politicized nature of judicial promotions increased the government’s control over the court system. Unfilled judgeships and inefficient court procedures continued to result in severe backlogs at both the trial and appellate levels.’ **[3n] (Section 1e)**

11.58 The Human Rights Watch World Report 2013, published 31 January 2013, stated ‘Despite the adoption of a National Judicial Policy in 2009, access to justice remained abysmal and courts remained rife with corruption and incompetence. Case backlogs remain huge at all levels. The judiciary’s use of suo motu proceedings – acting on its own motions – was considered so excessive that the International Commission of Jurists raised concerns about it.’ **[7i] (Judicial activism and independence)**

11.59 On 13 August 2012, the UN General Assembly published a summarised ‘Compilation [of reports] prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/2 – Pakistan’ for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated ‘UNCT [UN Country Team] noted that there are a number of issues confronting the justice system including significant case backlogs and delays for the litigants, absence of provision of free legal

aid for the poor, corruption and nepotism. Parallel legal systems make it even more challenging in terms of uniform and equal access to justice.’ **[83c] (paragraph 37)**

See also Security forces: [Avenues of complaint](#)

11.60 The Freedom House Freedom in the World 2013 – Pakistan report noted that ‘Lower courts remain plagued by corruption, intimidation, and a backlog of more than a million cases that results in lengthy pretrial detention. The 2009 National Judicial Policy aimed to tackle all three problems, and appears to have had some positive effects, with backlogs dramatically reduced in certain provinces.’ **[5a]**

11.61 The AHRC Report 2010 noted:

‘The disposal of cases in the country is extremely slow, giving rise to the accumulation of cases before the courts and the inability of the judicial system to deliver justice in an acceptable and timely manner. The disposal of ordinary cases takes a minimum of five to six years in Pakistan’s courts. If the cases go through the appeals process, they can take as long as 20 to 25 years, as each appeals court takes six to seven years to decide, and there are three to four such stages before reaching the Supreme Court.’ **[52e] (p19)**

11.62 With regard to cases dealt with by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), the USSD Report 2012 observed that ‘Suspects may be detained for 15 days without charge (renewable with judicial concurrence) and, prior to being charged, may be deprived of access to counsel. During the year the NAB rarely exercised this power. All offenses under the NAB are nonbailable, and only the NAB chairman has the power to decide whether to release detainees.’ **[3n] (Section 1d)**

See also [Corruption](#)

11.63 The AHRC Report 2010 stated that there was no specific law concerning to witness protection in Pakistan. The report noted ‘Due to this and because of the overall failure of the country’s justice system, it is a practice in the country for the witnesses to be threatened or even murdered. Murders have happened even within the court premises.’ **[52e] (p22)**

11.64 With regards to charges being made under the blasphemy laws, the US Commission on International Religious Freedom Annual Report 2013 (USCIRF Report 2013), published April 2013 and covering events from 31 January 2012 to 31 January 2013, noted:

‘Once a case is registered and a court hearing is scheduled, militants often pack courtrooms and publicly threaten violence if there is an acquittal. Lawyers who have refused to prosecute cases of alleged blasphemy or who defend those accused, as well as judges who issue acquittals, have been harassed, threatened, and even subjected to violence. The lack of procedural safeguards empowers accusers to use the laws to abuse religious freedom, carry out vendettas, or gain an advantage over others in land or business disputes or in other matters completely unrelated to blasphemy.’ **[53d] (p125)**

See also Freedom of religion: [Blasphemy laws](#)

11.65 However, Pakistan’s ‘National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21’, reproduced on 6 August 2012 by the UN General Assembly for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal

Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012, stated, with regards to witness protection:

‘Judges, prosecutors, lawyers and witnesses have faced threats from terrorists. As a result very often the witnesses decline to appear in the courts, which makes successful prosecution in terrorism cases an uphill task. In order to provide a secure environment free of pressure and intimidation and especially to give protection to witnesses some courts have permitted examination of witnesses through video conferences, where required, special escort is provided to bring the witnesses to the courts. Members of judiciary are also provided with guards at home, the courts and during travel.’ **[83b] (paragraph 115)**

For information on the penalties for absconding from trial see the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan’s Amendment in the Pakistan Penal Code 1860 to Provide Punishment for Absconding from Trial, undated, accessed 7 June 2011. **[29i]**

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Double jeopardy

11.66 Following consultation with a law firm in Pakistan, a letter dated 12 February 2008 from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) stated that:

‘We [the Pakistan law firm] have reviewed the provisions of law relating to double jeopardy to ascertain whether any individual who has been convicted in the U.K and has served time can be tried and sentenced for the same crime on his return to Pakistan and would advise as:

‘Under Section 403 of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1898 (the “Code”) no person who has once been tried by a Court of competent jurisdiction for an offence and convicted or acquitted of such offence shall during the pendency [sic] of the acquittal or conviction be liable to be tried again for the same offence. However, a person so acquitted or convicted may be tried for (a) any distinct offence for which a separate charge might have been made i.e. where more than one offence are committed by the same person; (b) a different offence arising out of the consequences of the act which constituted the first offence but which consequences together with the act constitute a different offence and (c) any other offence constituted by the same acts which constituted the first offence but which the court which first tried him was not competent to try.

‘To invoke Section 403 of the Code the following conditions must be satisfied:

‘i) The accused has already been tried for the offence charged against him,
 ‘ii) the trial was held by a court of competent jurisdiction, and
 ‘iii) a judgment or order of acquittal or conviction has been issued.’ **[11g]**

11.67 The same letter noted that:

‘The rule against “autrefois convict” i.e. double jeopardy, has received recognition in Article 13(A) of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan 1973 (the “Constitution”) which provides a constitutional guarantee to the effect that no person shall be prosecuted or punished for the same offence more than once.

'To ascertain whether... [a] person convicted by a court in U.K. is covered by Section 403 of the Code it needs to be determined whether the conditions set out for invoking Section 403 of the Code are met... The Code is silent on the issue of whether the term "court of competent jurisdiction" as used therein extends to cover a foreign court of competent jurisdiction. However, where the legislature has intended to extend cover of any statute to foreign courts it has done so by specific reference i.e. in the Control of Narcotic Substances Act, 1997 specific reference is made to a "foreign court of competent jurisdiction" and it is therefore safe to conclude that a "court of competent jurisdiction" for purposes of Section 403 of the Code has to be a court within the territorial jurisdiction of Pakistan...

'Likewise, the constitutional guarantee provided by Article 13 (A) of the Constitution will, in our opinion, not extend to an offence which has been tried and convicted outside Pakistan as the doctrine of dual sovereignty permits successive prosecutions by two states for the same conduct.' **[11g]**

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Penal code

- 11.68 For full text and recent amendments see the [Pakistan Penal Code \(Act XLV of 1860\)](#) **[21a]**

Qisas and Diyat Ordinances

- 11.70 Shirkat Gah – Women's Resource Centre, Pakistan, made a 'Stakeholders Joint Submission for Pakistan's Review in The Human Rights Council -14th Session, October 2012' (Shirkat Gah Stakeholders Joint Submission), undated, accessed 27 June 2013, in which it stated:

'Currently, as per the law, murder is primarily a crime against the person rather than a crime against the State and is governed by the provisions of Qisas and Diyat introduced in the criminal law in the year 1990 as part of the effort to "Islamize" laws in Pakistan. These changes redefined the offences of murder and manslaughter along with their punishments in "Islamic" terms and the provision for retribution or blood money was made available. The introduction of the Qisas and Diyat provisions have provided a statutory right to the heirs of the deceased to pardon the killer/s, ask for compensation or demand retribution. These provisions have also exempted some relations from any mandatory imprisonment sentences. A parent can kill a child or a grandchild and the only sentence under the law is blood money, though the Court has the discretion to sentence the accused to imprisonment for twenty five years depending upon the facts and circumstances of the case. There is no minimum sentence mentioned in the law. In practice however, it is rare for a parent to be sentenced with imprisonment for killing his own child. There is a similar provision for a spouse killing the other spouse provided there is a living child at the time of the killing. These provisions prove handy in cases of "honour" killings as the majority of such murders of women in Pakistan are committed by family members who either benefit from these provisions or are "forgiven" by the heirs of the deceased.' **[132a] (p8-9)**

- 11.71 The USSD IRF Report 2012 stated 'The country's interpretation of Islamic law allows offenders to offer monetary restitution to victims and allows victims to carry out physical retribution rather than seeking punishment through the court system.' **[3k] (Section II)**

11.72 The USSD Report 2010 observed, however, that although the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2005 had increased the penalties for karo kari and other forms of honour killings, ‘... human rights groups criticized the act because it allows the victim or the victim's heirs to negotiate physical or monetary restitution with the perpetrator in exchange for dropping charges, known as “qisas” and “diyat”.’ **[3g] (Section 1e)**

See also above sub-sections [Shariat Courts \(Islamic law\)](#) and [Tribal Justice System and Women: Honour killings](#)

Blasphemy Laws

11.73 The USSD IRF Report 2012 observed that ‘Freedom of speech is subject to “reasonable restrictions in the interest of the glory of Islam,” as stipulated in sections 295(a), (b), and (c) of the penal code. The consequences for contravening the country’s blasphemy laws are death for “defiling Prophet Muhammad”; life imprisonment for “defiling, damaging, or desecrating the Qur’an”; and 10 years’ imprisonment for “insulting another’s religious feelings”.’ **[3k] (Section II)**

11.74 The USCIRF Report 2013 stated that:

‘Two prominent Pakistani officials – Punjab Governor Salman Taseer and Federal Minister for Minorities Affairs Shahbaz Bhatti – were assassinated in early 2011 because of their opposition to Pakistan’s flawed blasphemy law. On January 2, 2011, Salman Taseer was assassinated by one of his police bodyguards, Mumtaz Qadri, who later confessed that he had killed the governor because of his views on blasphemy. Sentenced to death by an anti-terrorism court on October 1, his case is on appeal and he is being represented by a former chief justice of the Lahore High Court, Khawaja Muhammad Sharif. The judge who sentenced Qadri to death and his family have fled to Saudi Arabia due to death threats. Taseer’s son also was abducted in August 2011 by militants and remains missing.

‘On March 2, 2011, Shahbaz Bhatti, a longtime Christian activist for religious freedom and the only Christian in Pakistan’s federal cabinet, was assassinated outside his mother’s home in Islamabad by the Pakistani Taliban. Bhatti had received multiple death threats because of his advocacy against the blasphemy law. The investigation into his murder has seemingly ended and no one is currently in jail.’ **[53d] (p122)**

19.75 The USCIRF Report 2011 noted with regards to attempts to reform the blasphemy laws:

‘In November 2010, Sherry Rahman, a PPP parliamentarian, tabled a bill reforming the blasphemy laws. Rahman’s amendments would have: removed the death penalty and ensured that punishments are proportionate; included the requirement of premeditation or intent; ensured that anyone making false or frivolous accusations is penalized; and amended the penal code in accordance with Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to make any advocacy of religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination or violence a punishable offence. However, her party did not support the bill and Rahman received numerous death threats. Other quarters of the political spectrum also expressed support for some reform. In December 2010, the Council of Islamic Ideology, a government-sponsored advisory board, recommended that the blasphemy law be amended to prevent its misuse against any individuals irrespective of their religion, but opposed removing the death penalty.

'After the murders of Governor Taseer and Minister Bhatti, Prime Minister Gilani and other PPP officials stated that reform was no longer being considered. Since the killings, the Prime Minister has repeatedly stated that the government will not permit abuse, but that it has no plans to amend the law. Sherry Rahman was successfully pressured to withdraw her legislation and is rarely seen in public.' **[53b] (p116)**

- 11.76 The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) stated in its report, *The State of Human Rights in Pakistan in 2011* (AHRC Report 2011), published 10 December 2011, that the judge of an Anti-terrorist court who awarded the death sentence to the killer of Punjab governor, Salman Taseer, was forced to flee Pakistan after receiving threats from lawyers and religious fundamentalists in protest of his judgement made against Mumtaz Qadri. **[52g] (p44)**
- 11.77 The HRCP Report 2011 stated that 'Violence and intimidation of those accused of blasphemy continued as the government distanced itself from any move to reform the relevant law and surrendered space to extremist elements.' **[27g] (p82)**

For full text and recent amendments see the [Pakistan Penal Code \(Act XLV of 1860\)](#) **[21a]** For detail on the provisions of the laws and their impact on various religious groups, and further information on the deaths of Salman Taseer and Shahbaz Bhatti, see Section: Freedom of Religion: [Blasphemy Laws](#) and [Christians](#)

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Hudood Ordinances

- 11.78 The Freedom House *Freedom in the World 2013 – Pakistan* report noted that 'The Sharia court enforces the 1979 Hudood Ordinances, which criminalize extramarital sex and several alcohol, gambling, and property offenses. They provide for Koranic punishments, including death by stoning for adultery, as well as jail terms and fines. In part because of strict evidentiary standards, authorities have never carried out the Koranic punishments.' **[5a]**
- 11.79 The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom cited in its Annual Report 2013 (USCIRF Report 2013), published April 2013, that:
- 'The Hudood laws apply to Muslims and non-Muslims alike... In 2006, the Protection of Women Act removed the crime of rape from the sphere of the Hudood Ordinances and put it under the penal code, thereby eliminating the requirement that a rape victim produce four male witnesses to prove the crime. Under the law, convictions for rape must be based on forensic and circumstantial evidence. The Act also prohibited a case of rape from being converted into a case of fornication or adultery, which had been possible under the Hudood laws. Marital rape once again was made a criminal offense, as it had been prior to the 1979 implementation of the Hudood laws. However, an offense of fornication was included in the penal code, punishable by imprisonment for up to five years. In 2010, the Federal Shariat Court ruled that key sections of the 2006 law were unconstitutional and un-Islamic, which threatened to undermine these reforms entirely. The federal government has taken no action to implement the ruling.' **[53d] (p127)**
- 11.80 The [Offence of Zina \(Enforcement Of Hudood\) Ordinance, 1979](#), 9 February 1979, states under Sections 4 and 5:

'4. Zina:

'A man and a woman are said to commit "Zina" if they wilfully have sexual intercourse without being married to each other. Explanation: Penetration is sufficient to constitute the sexual intercourse necessary to the offence of Zina.

'5. Zina liable to hadd:

(1) Zina is zina liable to hadd if-

(a) it is committed by a man who is an adult and is not insane with a woman to whom he is not, and does not suspect himself to be married; or

(b) it is committed by a woman who is an adult and is not insane with a man to whom she is not, and does not suspect herself to be, married.

(2) Whoever is guilty of Zina liable to hadd shall, subject to the provisions of this Ordinance, -

(a) if he or she is a muhsan, be stoned to death at a public place; or

(b) if he or she is not muhsan, be punished, at a public place; with whipping numbering one hundred stripes.' **[21b]**

11.81 Definitions, as prescribed by the Hudood Ordinance, are offered in Section 2:

'2. Definitions:

'In this Ordinance, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject of context:

(a) "adult" means a person who has attained, being a male, the age of eighteen years or, being a female, the age of sixteen years, or has attained puberty;...

(b) "hadd" means punishment ordained by the Holy Quran or Sunnah;

(d) "Muhsan" means

(i) a Muslim adult man who is not insane and has had sexual intercourse with a Muslim adult woman who, at the time he had sexual intercourse with her, was married to him and was not insane; or

(ii) a Muslim adult woman who is not insane and has had sexual intercourse with a Muslim adult man who, at the time she had sexual intercourse with him, was married to her and was not insane;...' **[21b]**

11.82 An LLB (Bachelor of Laws) paper, published by the University of London, undated, stated:

'The offence of Zina is defined as "adultery" if one of the parties is married at the time the intercourse occurs and "fornication" if they are not. The [Protection of Women (Criminal Law Amendment)] 2006 Act] inserts a new offence of fornication into the penal code. The offence is punishable by imprisonment for up to five years and a fine not exceeding 10,000 Rupees. The new offence is, however, safeguarded from abuse by the creation of a new offence of false accusation of fornication. The new provision

provides that anyone who brings or gives false evidence of fornication shall be punished with imprisonment up to five years and a fine of up to 10,000 Rupees. Very importantly, once a prosecution for fornication results in an acquittal, the trial judge can, in the same proceedings, try and sentence the person bringing the charge.

‘The offence of adultery is the only offence retained by the Zina Ordinance itself. It is an offence for anyone to make a false accusation of adultery. The punishment for the offence follows the punishment of fornication in the penal code. A new definition of “confessions” has been added to the Ordinance. The new definition serves to prevent women being placed in the invidious position of having been deemed to have “confessed” to Zina when they brought an accusation of rape before the court, which the court found unproven.’ **[118a] (p5)**

11.83 The same source noted:

‘Finally, the 2006 Act amends the procedure governing sexual offences under both the penal code and the Zina Ordinance. Any complaint of adultery must be lodged directly in court, not made to the police. The judge hearing the case must examine on oath the complainant and at least four adult male eye-witnesses, who the court has established to be truthful. The witnesses must testify on oath to the committing of the act of penetration, i.e. the strict evidence required by the Sharia... **(p5)**

‘The procedure regarding allegations of fornication follows that of allegations of adultery, but only two actual eye-witnesses are required. The complainant and the eye-witnesses must be examined in court before the judge can issue a summons for the accused to attend the court.’ **[118a] (p6)**

11.84 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its report, the State of Human Rights in 2008 (HRCP Report 2008), published 1 April 2009, that ‘In order to award the “Hadd” punishment, the evidence of a non-Muslim can only be accepted if the accused is also non-Muslim. In addition, Muslims are liable for stricter penal sanctions than non-Muslims for the same crime e.g. Hadd for rape and zina. Muslims can be stoned to death, while non-Muslims receive 100 lashes. So far, though, Hadd punishment has not been carried out against anyone.’ **[27a] (p73, Freedom of thought, conscience and religion)**

11.85 On the release of women imprisoned under the Hudood Ordinance, the USSD IRF Report 2009 stated that ‘Approximately 2,500 women have been released... Many were unable to return to their homes because of social ostracism. A few others remained in custody, and most were housed in government-run shelters. The women, who were arrested under the Hudood Ordinance on charges of fornication, adultery, and possession of liquor, are now having their cases heard under the Women's Protection Bill.’ **[3c] (Section II)**

See also Section: Freedom of Religion: [Hudood Ordinances](#), and Section: Women: [Women’s Protection Act](#)

Code of criminal procedure

11.86 The [Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898](#), as amended by Act II in 1997, is available on the Punjab Police’s website. The document codifies the arrest and trial process, and provides procedural guidance, among other things, on the power of the courts; arrest, escape and recapture; compelling appearance before a court; production of documents

and movable property before a court; unlawful assembly; and proceedings in prosecution cases. [38]

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12. Arrest and detention – legal rights

First Information Reports (FIRs)

12.01 The United States Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, stated that:

‘A First Information Report (FIR) is the legal basis for any arrest. Police ability to initiate an FIR is limited; however, for certain crimes the police may initiate an FIR. Often a different party must file the FIR, depending on the type of crime, irrespective of whether there is reasonable proof of a crime. An FIR allows police to detain a suspect for 24 hours, after which a magistrate can order detention for an additional 14 days if police show that the detention is material to the investigation. Some authorities did not observe these limits on detention. There were reports that authorities filed FIRs without supporting evidence to harass or intimidate detainees or did not file them when adequate evidence was provided unless the complainant paid a bribe.

‘There were reports that some police detained individuals arbitrarily without charge or on false charges to extort bribes for their release. There were reports that some police also detained relatives of wanted individuals to compel suspects to surrender.

‘Police routinely did not seek a magistrate’s approval for investigative detention and often held detainees without charge until a court challenged the detention. When requested, magistrates approved investigative detention without requiring further justification. In cases of insufficient evidence, police and magistrates sometimes colluded to issue new FIRs, thereby extending detention beyond the 14-day period.’
[3n] (Section 1d)

12.02 The Citizens Police Liaison Committee (CPLC) of Pakistan noted on its website, accessed 14 March 2011, that a First Information Report (FIR):

‘...is a written document prepared by the police when they receive information about the commission of a cognizable offence. It is a report of information that reaches the police first in point of time and that is why it is called the First Information Report. It is generally a complaint lodged with the police by the victim of a cognizable offence or by someone on his/her behalf. Anyone can report the commission of a cognizable offence either orally or in writing to the police. Even a telephonic message can be treated as an FIR. It is a duty of police to register FIR without any delay or excuses. Non-registration of FIR is an offence and can be a ground for disciplinary action against the concerned police officer.’ **[121a]**

12.03 The CPLC went on to describe a cognizable and non-cognizable offence:

‘Cognizable Offence: A cognizable offence is one in which the police may arrest a person without warrant. They are authorized to start investigation into a cognizable case on their own and do not require any orders from the court to do so.

'Non-cognizable Offence: A non-cognizable offence is an offence in which a police officer has no authority to arrest without warrant. The police cannot investigate such an offence without the court's permission.' **[121a]**

12.04 The Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN), a network of 42 civil society organisations working to foster democratic accountabilities in Pakistan, stated in a press release dated 20 February 2012, that FAFEN observers visited 131 police stations in 71 districts of the Punjab, Sindh and Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) during October and December 2011. The report noted that people at 22 per cent of the monitored police stations stated they had to pay bribes for registering First Information Reports. **[130b]**

12.05 In a Response to Information Request, dated 4 November 2010, on the subject of First Information Reports, the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) reported that, in correspondence with a representative of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) on 8 October 2010, the HRCP representative stated '... while police in one area of Pakistan can become aware of an FIR against someone in another area of the country, they generally do not unless the police in the original jurisdiction call attention to a particular FIR as, for example, in a case that is particularly serious, politicized, or subject to public attention or that requires police to more actively search for a suspect.' **[12q]**

12.06 On the same subject, the IRB recorded that in correspondence with a Lahore-based lawyer on 6 October 2010, the lawyer stated:

'[T]here is no national system to track FIRs, and there is no systematic coordination between various police organisations at inter-provincial level or inter-organisation level. Police officers in one district will not be able to know about the FIRs registered elsewhere unless a circular is issued intimating them of offence and suspects. So, unless police is really after the accused, and get orders to search and seize in other districts or provinces the accused may remain at large.' **[12q]**

12.07 The IRB noted that in connection with terrorist-related cases, the same lawyer added:

'[I]n many terrorism cases (suicide bomb attacks etc.) news of the incident spreads like fire in the jungle. Concerned police often releases sketches of the suspects. Further, in many terrorism cases if [a] FIR is registered against certain recognisable/named person(s) that information should travel beyond the originating district but the police are not efficient, or well resourced. So there can be many lapses even in serious cases....

'[T]errorism cases are treated more seriously, so to say. And I believe information on terrorism suspects is circulated in other districts of the same province or other provinces more often and quickly. But this does not necessarily mean this is done diligently and efficiently in every case.' **[12q]**

See also Judiciary: [Anti-terrorism Act and courts](#)

12.08 The IRB continued, with regard to the acquisition of a passport when a FIR had been issued, that:

'The HRCP Representative explained that, since the registration of FIRs by police is a provincial responsibility and passports are issued by the national government, even a person that was the accused in multiple FIRs would not be barred from obtaining a passport unless the central government had specifically ordered that a passport not be issued to him or her... The Lawyer likewise stated that, if the accused remains "at large,"

an FIR should not be an obstacle to acquiring a passport since “[s]omeone accused of a bailable offence can get a protective bail before arrest” and, if the case against them is not strong, can seek bail from High Court...’ [12q]

- 12.09 On the subject of exit control in Pakistan, the IRB noted in a Response to Information Request dated 19 November 2007 that, following correspondence with a Karachi-based lawyer on 31 October 2007 ‘... Pakistani citizens who have an FIR [sic] registered against them can still leave Pakistan, and he added that the “lodging of [a] FIR by itself does not automatically stop a person from leaving Pakistan. Many FIRs are baseless, bogus and lodged to harass ... opponents but ultimately found frivolous and dismissed”.’ [12I]

See also Exit and return: [Passports](#) and [Exit Control List \(ECL\)](#)

- 12.10 The International Crisis Group (ICG) reported that on 12 August 2011 President Zardari signed the extension of the Party Political Order (2002) to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). The ICG noted that the president also reportedly amended the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR):

‘... to require that a prisoner be produced before the authorities within 24 hours of arrest, and given the right to bail, something that was previously denied to tribal populations. The president’s spokesman said that FCR provisions that allow collective punishment of an entire tribe for crimes committed by a member or on their territory, would be “softened” – indicating that perhaps women, children and elderly will be exempt from the collective punishment clause, as proposed in 2009.’ [20a]

See also Judiciary: [Frontier Crimes Regulation \(FCR\)](#)

Detention, bail and sentencing

- 12.11 The USSD Report 2012 noted:

‘Individuals frequently had to pay bribes to visit a prisoner. Foreign diplomats could meet with prisoners when they appeared in court and could usually meet with citizens of their countries in prison, although government officials sometimes delayed access...

‘The district coordination officer may recommend preventive detention for as long as 90 days to the provincial home department and, with the approval of the Home Department, can extend it for an additional 90 days. The law stipulates that detainees must be brought to trial within 30 days of their arrest.

‘Judges sometimes denied bail at the request of police or the community or upon payment of bribes. In some cases trials did not start until six months after the FIR, and at times individuals remained in pretrial detention for periods longer than the maximum sentence for the crime with which they were charged. SHARP [Society for Human Rights and Prisoner’s Aid] estimated that approximately 75 percent of the prison population was awaiting trial. The high number of inmates awaiting trial remained a large burden on the country’s jails. In some cases detainees were informed promptly of charges brought against them.

‘NGOs reported that bail sometimes was denied in blasphemy cases under the premise that, because defendants faced the death penalty, they were likely to flee.’

12.12 The USSD Report 2011, published 24 May 2012, stated:

'The law defines bailable and nonbailable offenses. On April 18, President Zardari signed the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2011, which grants statutory bail to prisoners undergoing trial and to convicts whose trials and appeals are pending over a prescribed time limit. Under the law prisoners undergoing trial are entitled to statutory bail if charged with any offense not punishable by death and if they have been detained for one year. In the case of an offense punishable by death, the accused is eligible for statutory bail if the trial has not been concluded in two years.' **[3n] (Section 1d)**

12.13 The USSD Country Reports on Terrorism 2011, published 31 July 2012, stated:

'In June, President Zardari signed the "Action in Aid of Civil Power Regulation, 2011," which provides a new framework for the detention of insurgents in the Federally and Provincially Administered Tribal Areas. The regulation provides a legal framework for security forces to take, hold, and process detainees captured during conflict. Human rights organizations have criticized the regulation because it gives broad powers to the Pakistan military and these groups allege it is inconsistent with Pakistan's international human rights obligations. However, the Regulation establishes a legal framework that did not previously exist, and provides for detainee transfer to civilian custody for potential prosecution under Pakistan's criminal law. Media reports indicated that Pakistani authorities began implementing the regulation in November and that some transfer of detainees from military to civilian custody began before year's end.' **[3o](Chapter 2. Country reports: South and Central Asia overview)**

12.14 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its report, State of Human Rights 2009 (HRCP Report 2009), published February 2010, that:

'The Supreme Court (CJ [Chief Justice] and five judges) ruled that the prison term of a convict who was allowed the benefit of section 382-B CrPC [Criminal Code of Procedure 382B - Period of detention to be considered while awarding sentence of imprisonment] should be counted from his day of arrest and not from the date of conviction. The court observed that the pre-sentence period a convict spent in prison should not go unaccounted for. It ruled that refusal to allow remission of pre-sentence custody period to a convict, whom the court had granted the benefit of section 382-B CrPC, was tantamount to deprivation of his liberty within the contemplation of the constitution.' **[27c] (p41)**

12.15 The HRCP Report 2011 noted with regards to pre-trial detainees that:

'As in earlier years, much of the prison population comprised [of] under-trial prisoners. The preference for custodial sentences swelled prisoners numbers as many remained jailed for the sole reason that they could not afford to pay the small fines that stood in the way of their release... In overcrowded jails it was next to impossible to keep convicted hardened criminals and under-trials or first-time offenders separate... **(p60)** In April, the president signed into law a bill that entitled under-trial prisoners to statutory bail if they were charged with any offence that was not punishable by death and had been in detention for one year.' **[27g] (p61)**

12.16 The same source added 'As many as 65 percent (35,215) of the prison inmates in Punjab were yet to be convicted and were detained under trial... As many as 10,865 inmates in the prisons in Sindh were under trial.' **[27g] (p62)**

12.17 The USSD Report 2012 noted:

‘Special rules apply to cases brought to court by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), which under the law established courts for corruption cases. Suspects may be detained for 15 days without charge (renewable with judicial concurrence) and, prior to being charged, may be deprived of access to counsel. During the year the NAB rarely exercised this power. All offenses under the NAB are nonbailable, and only the NAB chairman has the power to decide whether to release detainees.

‘Antiterrorism courts had the discretion to deny bail for some charges if the court had reasonable grounds to believe the accused was guilty.

‘Under the FCR in FATA, each tribal agency is administered by a political agent, who has legal authority to detain individuals preventively and require “bonds” to prevent undesired activity. In August 2011 the FCR was amended to exempt women over age 65 and children below age 16 from collective punishment. Collective punishment is applied incrementally, starting with the first immediate male family members, followed by the subtribe, and continuing outward. Although this reduces its scope, the FCR assigns collective punishment without regard to individual rights.’ **[3n] (Section 1d)**

See also [Corruption](#) and [Frontier Crimes Regulation \(FCR\)](#)

Convictions in absentia

12.18 The Daily Times noted in an article dated 8 June 2010 that ‘The government contended that convictions in absentia had no place in the Pakistani law, adding that it had been a settled principle of the country’s laws since the inception of the state. “Conviction in absentia is contrary to Article 10-A of the constitution, which provides that a person shall be entitled to a fair trial and due process”...’ **[55f]**

12.19 One Pakistan News reported on 21 January 2010, that, in a judgement by a 17-member court, ‘... conviction in absentia was declared void, which was unconstitutional and illegal, adding that it was also against the National Accountability Ordinance (NAO), which provides remedy to such a convict to file appeal.’ **[122a]**

See also Sections: Security forces: Police: [Arbitrary Arrest and Detention](#); Judiciary: [Anti-Terrorist Act and Courts](#); [Independence and Fair Trial](#); Religious Freedom: [Legal procedure for blasphemy charges](#); and [Exit Control List](#)

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13. Prison conditions

13.01 The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, stated that:

‘Prison conditions often were extremely poor and failed to meet international standards. Police sometimes tortured and mistreated those in custody and, at times, killed prisoners inside police facilities. Overcrowding was common, except for the cells of wealthy or influential prisoners. Provincial governments were the primary managers of prisons and detention centers. Human rights groups that surveyed prison conditions found sexual abuse, torture, and prolonged detention prevalent. The groups said that

prisons could not be described as correctional institutions because the conditions in many of the prisons were so inhumane that criminals often left more hardened than before their incarcerations.

'Inadequate food and medical care in prisons led to chronic health problems and malnutrition for those unable to supplement their diets with help from family or friends. In many facilities provisions for sanitation, ventilation, lighting, and access to potable water were inadequate.' **[3n] (Section 1c)**

- 13.02 The Foreign Prisoner Support Service, dated 24 June 2004, noted in its profile on Prisons and Prisoners in Pakistan Prisons, undated, that 'Prisons are not salubrious places. The common criminal from a poor background is assigned to Class C confinement, with virtually no amenities. Abuse is common. Prisoners of higher social status are assigned to Class B prisons, where conditions are better, and they can procure better food and some amenities from their own pocket. Class A prisons are for "prominent" offenders. Conjugal visits are not the rule but are allowed in some cases.' **[105]** See paragraph 13.14 for further information on prisoner's conjugal rights.
- 13.03 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its annual report, the 'State of Human Rights in 2012' (HRCP Report 2012), published March 2013, that:
- 'Pakistan's prisons continued to be characterised by overcrowding, a very high proportion of detainees being held in captivity often even before their trial had commenced, and reports of corruption to secure even basic needs. The common complaints remained the behaviour of prison staff, quality of food and water given to detainees, sanitation and lack of access to adequate healthcare. Besides detention in cramped conditions, family visits remained an ordeal. Little attention was paid to arranging recreational and positive activities for the detainees. The long-promised conjugal visits for the prisoners did not materialise.' **[27b] (p71)**
- 13.04 The HRCP Report 2012 stated that, despite a prison capacity of 44,578, there were a total of 75,444 detainees held in Pakistan's prisons. Of that number, 49,582 were under trial. **[27b] (p73)**
- 13.05 The HRCP Report 2012 provided a breakdown of the numbers of prisoners in Pakistan, along with the sanctioned capacity of the detention facilities in each province:
- 'According to statistics provided by prison authorities, every province/region, with the exception of Gilgit Baltistan, prisons held detainees in excess of authorized capacity at the end of 2012. In Punjab there were 49,889 prisoners while the authorized capacity was 21,527. In Sindh they numbered 14,119 against the sanctioned capacity of 11,937. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa the capacity was 7,996 and the prisons housed 8,113 detainees, in Balochistan prisons held 2,483 prisoners against the capacity for 2,473. In Gilgit Baltistan, the prisons held 260 and had the capacity to hold 645.' **[27b] (p72)**
- 13.06 The same source provided a tabulated breakdown of the prisons and number of prisoners in Pakistan. **[27b] (p82-86)**
- 13.07 On the monitoring of prisons and prisoners, the USSD Report 2012 noted that:
- 'The ICRC [International Committee of the Red Cross] reported great difficulty in accessing detention sites, in particular those holding security-related detainees. In 2010 the ICRC suspended prison visits in Punjab because it could no longer have regular access to detainees in that region, and at the end of January it closed its offices in

Lahore. In August the ICRC published a news release indicating it would continue to work in the country but on a reduced scale, reducing staff by approximately 75 percent and its operating locations from 10 to two. The announcement came three months after the killing of the ICRC health program manager in Quetta.

‘Despite dialogue with the government, authorities did not authorize ICRC visits to any detention sites in the provinces most affected by violence – KP, FATA, and Balochistan. However, the governments of Sindh, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Pakistan-administered Kashmir permitted the ICRC to conduct independent monitoring in civil prisons. ICRC delegates made confidential reports on their findings, offered recommendations to authorities, and, where relevant, initiated water-sanitation improvement projects.

‘Authorities at the local, provincial, and national levels permitted some human rights groups and journalists to monitor prison conditions for juveniles and female inmates.’
[3n] (Section 1c)

- 13.08 The Freedom House report Freedom in the World 2013 – Pakistan, published 10 June 2013, stated:

‘Feudal landlords, tribal groups, and some militant groups operate private jails where detainees are regularly maltreated. While a number of cases are investigated and some prosecutions do occur, impunity for human rights abuses remains the norm. In a positive step, in May 2012 Zardari authorized the creation of an independent National Human Rights Commission, which would be empowered to monitor human rights conditions, investigate cases of violations, and provide recommendations to the government. However, critics raised concern that the new body would not be able to address violations committed by the military or intelligence agencies.’ **[5a]**

- 13.09 The HRCP Report 2011 stated:

‘Healthcare facilities remained woefully inadequate in prisons... Mental health facilities in prisons across Pakistan were almost non-existent. The Karachi Central Prison where around 3,700 prisoners were detained had one psychiatrist and no medical officer. The Hyderabad Central Jail had one psychiatrist for nearly 1,700 prisoners, the Central Prison in Peshawar had 156 prisoners, two psychiatrists, two psychologists and four nurses, Sukkur prison had 1,022 prisoners with no psychiatrist, but two medical officers, while the Turbat prison had 81 prisoners with no psychiatrist or psychologist, but one medical officer.’ **[27g] (p63)**

- 13.10 The US Department of State International Religious Freedom Report for 2012 (USSD IRF Report 2012), published 20 May 2013, cited that:

‘Police reportedly tortured and abused persons in custody on religious charges. According to the local NGO Center for Legal Aid Assistance and Settlement (CLAAS), in October, guards at the Central Jail in Mianwali allegedly tortured Younis Masih, who has been imprisoned since his 2005 death sentence for blasphemy. Masih claimed that prison authorities beat him, deprived him of proper food and medical attention, and subsequently charged him with inciting a riot in the prison. Masih’s appeal of his death sentence remained pending at year’s end.’ **[3k] (Section II: Abuses of Religious Freedom)**

- 13.11 The HRCP Report 2011 recorded that ‘The high incidence of death among inmates continued and at least 92 detainees died in prisons across Pakistan in 2011. At least 99 prisoners were reported to have been injured.’ **[27g] (p61)**
- 13.12 Regarding religious freedom in prison, the HRCP Report 2009, published February 2010, stated that:
- ‘During the visits, the HRCP teams found that Muslim prisoners were generally facilitated with regard to their religious practices. It was learned that there are 25 mosques at Karachi Central Prison. Though non-Muslim prisoners were generally allowed worship in accordance with their religious beliefs there was no specific place of worship for them at any of the prisons visited. Jails authorities had no provision or instructions to cater to dietary needs of religious minorities.’ However, the HRCP reported that some prison staff catered to prisoners needs out of goodwill. **[27c] (p92)**
- 13.13 The same report noted that ‘In January [2009], Adiala jail became the first prison in the country to have a church on its premises. The jail authorities had provided land for the church and the local Christian community provided the Rs [Rupees] 1.2 million needed for constructing the building for around 250 Christian prisoners in the jail.’ **[27c] (p99)**

See also Section: [Christians](#)

- 13.14 The HRCP Report 2011 stated ‘Decisions such as keeping death-row prisoners out of death cells and allowing conjugal visits were not implemented. Death row prisoners in Peshawar’s Central Prison threatened a hunger strike till death if the authorities did not shift them from the death cells to other barracks, as was required under a law passed in 2010.’ **[27g] (p62)**
- 13.15 With regards to female prisoners, the HRCP Report 2011 recorded at least 991 women detainees in prisons across Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan. At least 28 of those women were on death row. **[27g] (p62)**

For information on prison conditions for children see: Children, subsection [Judicial and penal rights](#)

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14. Death penalty

For information on the death penalty for children, see the section on Children, [Judicial and penal rights](#).

- 14.01 Pakistan retains the death penalty for ordinary crimes (Amnesty International, Death Penalty: Abolitionist and Retentionist Countries, accessed 18 November 2010) **[13c]**, including murder, blasphemy, arms trading, drug trafficking, armed robbery, stripping a woman of her clothes in public, extra-marital sex and rape. (Human Rights Watch, Enforcing the International Prohibition on the Juvenile Death Penalty, 30 May 2008) **[7d] (p16)** The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2009, Pakistan, (USSD Report 2009), published 11 March 2010, added ‘The penal code calls for the death sentence or life imprisonment for anyone who blasphemes the Prophet Muhammad.’ **[3b] (Section 2c)**

- 14.02 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its report, the State of Human Rights in 2012 (HRCP Report 2012), published March 2013, that:
- ‘The government maintained its informal moratorium on execution of capital punishment throughout the year except for the hanging in November of one Mohammad Hussain, a former army man who had been awarded death sentence by a court martial for murdering an army officer... During the year, 242 people (only one woman among them) were awarded death sentence in 169 cases, showing a continuing decline in such convictions – 32% less than the 2010 figure of 356 and 22.7% less than the 2011 figure of 313.’ **[27b] (p54)**
- 14.03 Pakistan’s first execution in four years took place on 15 November 2012. Soldier Muhammed Hussain was hanged for the killing of a superior officer and two others. Government officials told Amnesty International that the execution “runs against the grain of current policy because it was a military case.” More than 8,313 people remain on death row in Pakistan. **[13i]** (Amnesty International, 15 November 2012)
- 14.04 The FCO noted in its quarterly update on Pakistan, dated 30 September 2012, that:
- ‘Behram Khan, who was sentenced for murdering a lawyer by an Anti-Terrorism Court in 2003, had been due to be hanged on 30 June 2012, following a stay of execution from 23 May, but was given a further stay of execution until 30 September. His execution would have been the first since 2008, when a de facto moratorium on the death penalty took effect. In July, the Sindh High Court announced a moratorium on the death penalty until at least the end of the current government’s term of office (due to expire in March 2013).’ **[11b]** The country of origin information service could find no information to indicate that Behram Khan’s execution actually took place.
- 14.05 The USSD Report 2009 stated ‘In August [2009] President Zardari issued a decree making “Internet crimes” punishable by execution or life imprisonment if they caused the death of a person; the decree raised the total number of capital offenses to 28.’ **[3b] (Section 1c)**
- 14.06 On 10 February 2012, Amnesty International reported that a Pakistani man convicted of blasphemy, who was handed down the death sentence in 2009, had his conviction upheld by a court in Punjab province. Muhammad Ishaq was accused of insulting the Prophet Mohammed (Section 295-C of the Pakistan Penal Code) but denied the charge. (Amnesty International, 10 February 2012) **[13f]**
- 14.07 On 12 August 2011, BBC News reported that a paramilitary soldier convicted of killing an unarmed teenager in Karachi, in June 2011, was sentenced to death. Six other people were sentenced to life imprisonment for their involvement in the killing. **[35i]**
- See also Security forces: [Extrajudicial killings](#)
- 14.08 The USSD Report 2010 observed ‘On October 11, the HRCP criticized the torture and humiliation of several death row prisoners at the Singh District prison. Three prisoners allegedly were stripped naked and were not allowed to urinate for hours, despite being forced to drink several liters of water. The HRCP brought this incident to the attention of the Punjab prison chief but never received a response.’ **[3g] (Section 1c)**
- 14.09 Reporting on the more than 8,000 prisoners facing the death sentence, the Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) reported on 15 March 2011 that some have been

on 'death row' for 20 years. Despite the number having risen from 5,447 in 2005 there has been no increase in the capacity of Pakistan's prisons. **[52c]**

14.10 The Asian Human Rights Commission report, The State of Human Rights in Pakistan: 2010 (AHRC Report 2010), published February 2010, added that the Pakistan government '...has been unable to commute these death sentences because of strong resistance from powerful groups such as the higher judiciary and the military.' **[52e] (p1)**

14.11 Amnesty International (AI) noted in its annual Report 2010, published 28 May 2010, that:

'Promises made in 2008 to commute all death sentences to life imprisonment remained unfulfilled. In September [2009], President Zardari called on provincial governments to submit recommendations on commuting the death penalty to prison terms of 24 to 30 years. On 31 August, the Supreme Court suspended an order passed by the Lahore High Court in April under which death sentences would not be imposed on women and juveniles in narcotics cases.' **[13d] (p253, Death penalty)**

14.12 However, the USSD Report 2012 stated:

'In 2009 Muslim villagers accused a Christian woman, Aasia Bibi, of blasphemy after a dispute at work. Police arrested Bibi, and she was denied bail under the blasphemy laws. In 2010 a court sentenced Bibi to death, the first woman sentenced to death for blasphemy. The verdict touched off a massive debate about the blasphemy laws, with religious extremists calling for her execution and more moderate voices calling for her pardon or an appeal of the guilty verdict. At year's end Bibi was waiting for her appeal to be heard at the Lahore High Court...' **[3n] (Section 1e)**

See also Freedom of Religion: [Christians](#) and [Freedom of speech and media](#)

14.13 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its report, State of Human Rights in 2009 (HRCP Report 2009), published February 2010, that:

'On April 21, the Shariat Appellate Bench of the Supreme Court rejected an appeal against the Federal Shariat Court [FSC] judgement that had held that death was the only punishment for blasphemy. The appeal had been filed 18 years earlier. The Shariat Appellate bench of the Supreme Court upheld the FSC verdict to the effect that in Hudood cases the President/Governor had no authority to commute or cancel sentences and dismissed Federation's 18-year old appeal [sic].' **[27c] (p46)**

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15. Political affiliation

15.01 The English-language newspaper, Pakistan Today, reported, in a pre-election article dated 6 March 2013, that:

'There is a proliferation of political parties in Pakistan. Currently 227 political parties are registered with the Election Commission of Pakistan. If you include unregistered political parties there would be over three hundred political parties. Up to now 123 are entitled to contest the elections. This number is going to rise in the next two weeks. However, not all of them will field candidates. There may be 35-40 political parties, excluding

independent candidates, in the elections to the national and provincial assemblies. Out of these only 15 to 20 parties are expected to draw attention.’ [36a]

Freedom of political expression

15.02 The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, noted that:

‘The law provides the majority of citizens with the right to change their government peacefully. The country held national and provincial elections in 2008 that brought opposition parties to power. Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Kashmir, and FATA have different political systems. Of these, only FATA had representation in the national parliament.

‘Residents of FATA are represented in the national parliament but do not have a voice in federal decision making over the tribal areas, an authority that belongs to the president. Tribal residents do not have the right to change their local government, because unelected civilian bureaucrats nominally ran the tribal agencies. The elected councils in FATA, set up in 2007 to provide local representation within the tribal areas, did not have an active role in governing the tribal areas. In August 2011 President Zardari signed the Extension of the Political Parties Order 2002 to the Tribal Areas. Through this decree the government allows political parties to operate freely in FATA.

‘Azad Kashmir has an interim constitution, an elected unicameral assembly, a prime minister, and a president, who is elected by the assembly. Both the president and legislators serve five-year terms. Of the 49 assembly seats, 41 are filled through direct elections and eight are reserved seats (five for women and one each for representatives of overseas Kashmiris, technocrats, and religious leaders). However, the federal government exercised considerable control over the structures of government and electoral politics. Its approval is required to pass legislation, and the federal minister for Kashmir affairs exercised significant influence over daily administration and the budget. The Kashmir Council, composed of federal officials and Kashmiri assembly members and chaired by the federal prime minister, also holds some executive, legislative, and judicial powers. The military retains a guiding role on issues of politics and governance. Those who do not support Azad Kashmir’s accession to Pakistan were barred from the political process, government employment, and educational institutions. They also were subject to surveillance, harassment, and sometimes imprisonment by security services.’
[3n] (Section 3)

15.03 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan observed in its report, the ‘State of Human Rights in 2011’ (HRCP Report 2011), published March 2012, that:

‘In August, the president extended the Political Parties Act to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), enabling political parties to formally engage in political activities in the region and to nominate candidates to contest elections. HRCP welcomed the extension of the law to FATA but considered more steps needed to be taken to facilitate political activities, especially a mechanism to ensure implementation of fundamental rights such as the right to association, to freedom of expression and to access information. Enforcement of these rights was at the whim of the local administration as FATA was outside the jurisdiction of the higher judiciary in Pakistan.’ [27g] (p145)

See also Judiciary: [Frontier Crimes Regulation \(FCR\)](#)

15.04 The US Department of State's International Religious Freedom Report for 2011 (USSD IRF Report 2011), published 30 July 2012, stated that:

'Religious belief or specific adherence to a religious group was not required for membership in the ruling party or the moderate opposition parties. All political parties, including religious parties, had a separate minority wing, and some of the religious parties provided seats to religious minorities in provincial assemblies after the 2008 general elections. The government did not restrict the formation of political parties based on a particular religious group, religious belief, or interpretation of religious doctrine. The government monitored the activities of various Islamist parties and affiliated clergy due to alleged links to terrorist and extremist organizations...

15.05 The USSD IRF Report 2012, published 20 May 2013, noted:

'There are reserved seats for religious minority members in both the national and provincial assemblies. The seats are allocated to political parties on a proportional basis determined by their overall representation in the assembly. The 342-seat national assembly has 13 members of minority religious groups, 10 of whom held reserved seats for minorities and three of whom held reserved seats for women. As part of the 18th Amendment, the 104-seat senate has four reserved seats for religious minorities, one from each province. Reserved seats for religious minorities also exist in the provincial assemblies: three in Khyber Pakhunkhwa (KP), eight in Punjab, nine in Sindh, and three in Balochistan. Minorities are represented in the local government system with a minimum of one seat per zila, tehsil (a zila is equivalent to a district and a tehsil is an administrative unit within a zila), or union council, as stipulated under the provincial Local Government Ordinances. In Balochistan Province, religious minority representation is based on population, with a minimum of two seats per zila.' **[3k]**
(Section II: Legal/Policy Framework)

15.06 The HRC Report 2010 noted that:

'At the end of 2010, in the 342-member National Assembly, the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] had 127 members, the PML-N 90 [Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz], MQM 25 [Muttahida Qaumi Movement], ANP 13 [Awami National Party], JUI-F eight [Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam – Maulana Fazal ur-Rehman], the PML-Q 50 [Pakistan Muslim League – Quaid-e-Azam], although half of them had defected to from [sic] a Like-Minded Group. Nineteen members were not affiliated with any party. At the end of 2010, the PPP Parliamentarian was the largest party in the 100-member Senate, the upper house of parliament, with 27 members, while the PML-Q was the second largest group with 22 members. The PML-N had seven members, JUI-F 13, MQM and ANP six each, BNP-Awami and Jamaat-e-Islami three each, National Party two and Jamhoori Watan Party, PPP-Shaheed Bhutto, PPP-Sherpao, and PKMAP had one member each.' **[27e] (p191)**

15.07 On elections in Gilgit Baltistan, the USSD Report 2010 noted:

'The first elections in Gilgit Baltistan were held in November 2009 for a 24-member legislative assembly, with the PPP winning the majority of the votes. Syed Mehdi Shah of the PPP was chosen as the first-ever chief minister, replacing direct rule by the federal government. According to a preelection analysis by FAFEN, government interference, weak administration, procedural irregularities, and erroneous voter lists affected the election results. Although the election was largely peaceful, two persons were killed and at least 40 were injured in several incidents of violence. On March 23 [2010], Shama Khalid took the oath as governor of Gilgit-Baltistan, becoming the

country's second-ever female governor of a province; however, she died from cancer on September 15.' **[3g] (Section 3)**

See [Political system](#) and [Freedom of speech and media](#)

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Freedom of association and assembly

- 15.08 The USSD Report 2012 noted that 'The law provides for freedom of assembly and freedom of association, subject to restrictions.' **[3n] (Section 2b)**
- 15.09 The same source observed, on the right to assemble, that:
- 'By law district authorities can prevent gatherings of more than four persons without police authorization. The law permits the government to ban all kinds of rallies and processions, except funeral processions, for reasons of security. Authorities generally prohibited Ahmadis from holding conferences or gatherings.
- 'There were several successful protests, strikes, and demonstrations throughout Sindh, both peaceful and violent. Law enforcement agencies did not have the capacity to intervene and prevent these gatherings.' **[3n] (Section 2b)**
- 15.10 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its annual report, State of Human Rights in 2012 (HRCP Report 2012), published March 2013, that:
- 'Protests, both violent and peaceful, were rife in the country throughout 2012. Large number of people typically gathered at public places and blocked important roads to protest issues of concern, including electricity shortages, absence of fuel or increase in its price, inflation, lawlessness, drone attacks in the tribal regions of Pakistan, alleged desecration of the Holy Quran by a pastor in the US and the release of content on the internet that was considered blasphemous. Political parties, including one ruling in the Punjab, also held rallies against load-shedding and inflation, shifting the blame on the federal government in the centre. The Punjab chief minister also joined a demonstration in the city of Lahore to protest against prolonged load-shedding.
- 'Bans were imposed to curtail protests in the name of public order, although sometimes groups of citizens and political parties disregarded the bans. Through the course of the year protestors were arrested, beaten and even detained for peaceful assembly, ostensibly for holding up traffic by protesting on the roads.' **[27b] (p132-133)**
- 15.11 The HRCP Report 2012 provided a number of examples of people exercising their right to assemble, as well as curbs those rights, during 2012. **[27b] (p134-139)**
- 15.12 On freedom of association, the USSD Report 2012 noted 'The constitution provides for the right of association subject to restrictions imposed by law. According to the now-dissolved Ministry of Social Welfare and Special Education, there were more than 100,000 NGOs [non-governmental organisations] working in the country; however, due to the fragmented legal and regulatory framework, the exact number of NGOs was not known.' **[3n] (Section 2b)**

- 15.13 The HRCP Report 2012 stated ‘Some of the restrictions on formation of trade unions in 2012 amounted to undue constraints on the freedom to associate. These included the legal provision barring formation of trade unions in establishments with 50 workers or less in Punjab and 20 or less workers in other provinces. Informal workers and those who worked full-time but lacked the proof of employment were also ineligible to form trade unions.’ **[27b] (p142)**

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Opposition groups and political activists

- 15.14 The HRCP Report 2012 stated:

‘Even though a separate political party existed for all aggrieved groups in the country, including the Baloch, Shia Hazaras, and religious minorities, a general lack of democratic spirit was witnessed within most parties. Out of the 162 registered political parties in Pakistan in 2012, there were only a few who could claim that free and fair internal elections had been conducted. Reports by civil society organisations revealed that a majority failed to carry out any meaningful intra-party elections. Instead, a thinly-disguised selection process was witnessed which ensured that the same old office-bearers held on to important posts. Almost all mainstream political parties held their intraparty elections close to the general elections, due less to the democratic spirit and more to meet ECP [Election Commission of Pakistan] conditions.’ **[27b] (p152)**

- 15.15 The HRCP Report 2011 added ‘While legitimate political, student and workers’ organisations faced difficulty in operating, the banned militant groups demonstrated their resilience and the government’s inability to enforce the ban on them.’ **[27g] (p126)**

- 15.16 The HRCP Report 2010 observed:

‘The federal government banned five Baloch organisations including the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), Baloch Liberation Front (BLF), Baloch Republican Army (BRA), Lashkar-e-Balochistan (LB) and Baloch Musalla Difa Organization. Interior Minister Rheman Malik said the five organisations were involved in suicide attacks, rocket attacks and killing of innocent people. He said no organisation using the name of “army” or “lashkar” would be allowed to work in the province and the security forces would launch targetted operation[s] against them. He said the State Bank of Pakistan had been asked to freeze the accounts of these organisations. Baloch separatist organisations often did not allow civil society outfits and non-Baloch political parties to freely carry out their activities in the province.’ **[27e] (p178)**

See also [Security Situation](#) and [Annex B: Political organisations](#)

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Politically motivated violence

- 15.17 The South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) stated in its Pakistan Assessment 2012, accessed 21 March 2012, regarding ‘target killings’, that:

'... a continuous stream of assassinations inspired by sectarian, political or purely criminal motives, and executed by a range of armed non-state actors – engulfed the nation. A February 14, 2012, Home Department Report observed, "Target killings still continue in most parts of the country and major reasons behind these are sectarian, demographic changes, easy access to illicit weapons, mistrust among ethnic groups, family enmities and business rivalries". Significantly, official documents noted that, over the preceding four years, since the Pakistan People's Party (PPP)-led coalition came into power in 2008, the Government had issued about 50,000 prohibited-bore arms licenses. The licenses had been issued to applicants from all the Provinces, allowing them to carry sub-machineguns and AK-47s for their "personal security".' **[61b]**

- 15.18 In a summary of the publication 'Conflict dynamics in Karachi', dated October 2012, the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) reported:

'Violence in Karachi, Pakistan's largest city, is multifaceted. Different types of violence – including ethnopolitical, militant, sectarian, and criminal – have claimed more than 7,000 lives since 2008...

'The armed wings of major political parties, including the MQM, PPP, and ANP, are the main perpetrators of urban violence. The parties clash over city resources and funds generated through extortion.

'Historically, Karachi's ethnopolitical violence has pitted Urdu-speaking mohajirs (migrants) of the MQM against Pashtuns represented by the ANP. But clashes between the rural, Sindh-based PPP and Karachi-centric MQM are increasing as part of a broader power struggle between the city- and provincial-level governments.

'Militant groups, including the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and extremist sectarian organizations, have consolidated their presence in the city. In addition to drawing new recruits and generating funds through criminal activities, militants increasingly attack state and security targets in Karachi.

'State initiatives to stem violence are superficial and ad hoc, and routinely fail to address the underlying causes of Karachi's violence, including poor urban planning, politicization of the police, proliferating seminary networks, and a flawed criminal justice system.

'High-level interventions by the Pakistan Army and Supreme Court have helped temporarily disrupt cycles of violence but do not offer sustainable solutions to Karachi's violent politics.' **[140a]**

- 15.19 On 15 July 2013 the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) expressed its concern at the steep rise in killings in Karachi during the first six months of 2013. The statistics, based on newspaper reports, cited the deaths of 1,726 people killed in sectarian violence, targeted killings and other incidences of violence. During the same period in 2012, 1,215 violent deaths were recorded. **[27i]**

- 15.20 The HRCP Report 2012 reported on the law and order situation in Karachi and noted:

'Media reports highlighted that on average at least six people were being killed each day in Karachi alone. Political affiliations of victims were suspected to be the cause of their targeting. No political parties were spared though; round 61 of the dead belonged to Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), 18 to Pakistan People's Party (PPP), 19 to

Awami National Party (ANP), 13 to Mohajir Qaumi Movement-Haqiqi (MQM-H) and eight to Sunni Tehreek (ST).’ **[27b] (p66)**

- 15.21 The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) noted in its report, *The State of Human Rights in Pakistan in 2011* (AHRC Report 2011), published 10 December 2011, that 1,800 people were killed in Sindh province’s capital, Karachi, in fighting between the ruling parties and in targeted killings. The report added that only following the Supreme Court’s intervention the killings in Karachi were controlled. **[52g] (p38)**
- 15.22 In its analysis of the security situation in Karachi, BBC News reported on 8 July 2011:
- ‘Karachi is arguably one of South Asia’s most violent cities. It is not only the largest city and port of Pakistan, but also a major industrial and commercial centre.
- ‘The city is plagued by extortion rackets, land-grab mafia and armed groups fighting turf wars for their share of its resources. The level of violence this week has not been seen for years. Targeted killings and drive-by shootings are widely blamed on armed gangs linked to the city’s main political parties.
- ‘There were always fears that with last week’s resignation from the government by the city’s main political party - the MQM [Muttahida Qaumi Movement] - increased violence and instability would bring Pakistan’s economic capital to a grinding halt.’ **[35i]**
- 15.23 The South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) reported in its *South Asia Intelligence Review* (SAIR), dated 11 July 2011: ‘The current spate of killings in Karachi principally resulted from clashes between MQM and PPP’s [Pakistan People’s Party] ally, Awami National Party (ANP), drawing a line of blood between the 45 per cent of Urdu speaking Mohajirs in the city, on whose behalf the MQM claims to act; and the ANP, “representing” the city’s 25 per cent Pashtun population. [The remaining 30 per cent comprise Punjabis, Sindhis, Balochs, etc.]’ **[61f] (Volume 10, No. 1)**
- 15.24 The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) stated, in its April 2012 Country Report on Pakistan, that:
- ‘Much of the violence stems from tensions between the MQM, which derives most its support from the descendants of generally Urdu-speaking Muslims who migrated from what is now India after partition in 1947, and the Awami National Party (ANP), which represents ethnic-Pashtun migrants. In recent years Karachi’s precarious ethnic balance has been affected by the arrival of tens of thousands of Pashtuns displaced by conflict in Pakistan’s Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), attracted by better economic opportunities or forced out of parts of the country affected by flooding in 2010-11.’ **[2d] (The Political Scene)**
- 15.25 The SATP’s *South Asia Intelligence Review* dated 7 May 2012 commented on further violence in Karachi when the Security Forces (SF) commenced an operation in the Lyari area on 27 April 2012 against the People’s Aman (Peace) Committee (PAC), allegedly linked to, and supported by, the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA). By the 5 May, 51 people had been killed, including 26 civilians, 12 SF personnel and 13 ‘criminals’. **[61m] (Volume 10, No. 44)**
- 15.26 The USSD Report 2012 cited that:
- ‘On some university campuses in Karachi and Lahore, armed groups of students, most commonly associated with the All Pakistan Mutahidda Students Organization (affiliated

with the Muttahida Qaumi Movement) and the Islami Jamiat Talaba (affiliated with Jamaat-e-Islam) clashed with and intimidated other students, instructors, and administrators over issues such as language, syllabus content, examination policies, grades, doctrines, and dress. These groups frequently influenced the hiring of staff, admissions to universities, and sometimes the use of institutional funds. They generally achieved such influence through a combination of protest rallies, control of campus media, and threats of mass violence. In response university authorities prohibited political activity on many campuses, but the ban had limited effect.’ **[3n] (Section 2a)**

See also Ethnic groups – [Muttahida Qaumi Movement \(MQM\)](#)

- 15.27 On political violence elsewhere in the country, the HRC Report 2011 stated that targeted killings of several political leaders and activists were reported in Balochistan. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA, political leaders and activists were targeted in terrorist attacks, including suicide attacks and bombings. **[27g] (p151)**

See also Annex A: [Political organisations](#) and Annex B: [Terrorist and extremist groups](#)

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16. Freedom of speech and media

- 16.01 On 6 August 2012 the UN General Assembly reproduced Pakistan’s ‘National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21’, for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated:

‘Following the restoration of democracy in 2008 all curbs against the media were lifted. The “Right to Information” is now guaranteed by the Constitution as a fundamental right.

‘Media in Pakistan is completely free. Over a 100 media channels frequently highlight political, social and human rights issues and lead the national debate on issues of public importance. Press Council of Pakistan is an autonomous and independent statutory body which is entitled to receive complaints of interference by media personnel against “Federal Government, provincial government or any other organization” in free functioning of the media. It can also appoint enquiry commissions to deal with such cases.’ **[83b] (paragraph 79-80)**

- 16.02 The Asian Human Rights Commission, commenting on the speech made by Pakistan’s foreign minister, Ms. Rabbani Khar, at the UN Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on Pakistan, stated on 4 November 2012 that:

‘... as Pakistan has remained a national security state it is difficult to imagine how the “Right to Information” is now guaranteed. In addition there is also the Official Secrets Act, 1923 prevailing, with which anyone could be declared an enemy of the state. This ensures that the media never reports adversely on military operations or killings by military officers as these entities are given a “sacred” status. Freedom of expression is further narrowed by the banning of YouTube and many international websites on the pretext of blasphemy and obscenity.’ **[52m]**

- 16.03 The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, noted:

'The law provides for freedom of speech and press. However, there was some censorship, and threats, harassment, violence, and killings led journalists and editors to practice self-censorship.

'... the government impeded criticism by monitoring political activity. Citizens could criticize the government publicly or privately, but they were restricted when criticizing the military. Blasphemy laws restricted individuals' right to free speech concerning matters of religion and religious doctrine.

'The independent media were active and expressed a wide variety of views; journalists often criticized the government. Previously unreported events, such as persecution of minorities, were covered; however, journalists were restricted when criticizing or questioning the role of the military. Section 99 of the penal code allows the government to restrict information that might be prejudicial to the national interest. Threats and violence against journalists who reported on sensitive problems such as security force abuses occurred during the year. The government also impeded criticism by monitoring political activity and controlling the media' **[3n] (Section 2a)**

See also Freedom of religion: [Blasphemy laws](#)

- 16.04 The Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2012 Human Rights and Democracy Report, published 15 April 2013, noted that:
- 'Pakistan's vibrant media continued to challenge the establishment and stand up for human rights issues in 2012. Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Hina Rabbani Khar, acknowledged the importance of the media and civil society in this regard in her statement to the UN for Pakistan's Universal Periodic Review in October. However, as both Reporters Without Borders and the South Asia Free Media Association have highlighted, Pakistan remains an extremely dangerous place for journalists to operate and report freely. There have been several reports of threats to journalists, most publicly by the Pakistani Taliban (TTP) in response to reporting of the shooting of Malala Yousafzai.' **[11e]**
- 16.05 The Freedom House report Freedom of the Press 2012, published 3 December 2012, rated Pakistan's press freedom status as 'Not free' and stated that media freedom '... worsened in 2011 as journalists faced an unprecedented level of violence and threats from a range of sources, including the military, intelligence services, and militant groups.' **[5d]**
- 16.06 The same source added 'The constitution and other legislation, such as the Official Secrets Act, authorize the government to curb freedom of speech on subjects including the constitution itself, the armed forces, the judiciary, and religion. Harsh blasphemy laws have occasionally been used to suppress the media.' **[5d]**
- 16.07 Reporters Without Borders ranked Pakistan 159 out of 179 countries in its Press Freedom Index 2013, published 25 January 2012, a drop of eight points from the previous year. The report noted 'Despite having a diverse and lively media, Pakistan remains one of the world's most dangerous countries for reporters.' **[23a] (p11)**
- 16.08 The US Department of State's International Religious Freedom Report for 2012 (USSD IRF Report 2012), published 20 May 2013, observed, in particular with regard to religion and the blasphemy laws, that:

'A 1974 constitutional amendment declared that Ahmadis are non-Muslims. Sections 298(b) and 298(c) of the penal code, commonly referred to as the "anti-Ahmadi laws," prohibit Ahmadis from calling themselves Muslims, referring to their religious beliefs as Islam, preaching or propagating their religious beliefs, inviting others to accept Ahmadiyya teachings, or insulting the religious feelings of Muslims. The punishment for violation of these provisions is imprisonment for up to three years and a fine. Most politicians oppose any amendments to the constitution affecting its Islamic clauses, especially the ones relating to Ahmadi Muslims.

'Freedom of speech is subject to "reasonable restrictions in the interest of the glory of Islam," as stipulated in sections 295(a), (b), and (c) of the penal code. The consequences for contravening the country's blasphemy laws are death for "defiling Prophet Muhammad"; life imprisonment for "defiling, damaging, or desecrating the Qur'an"; and 10 years' imprisonment for "insulting another's religious feelings." Under the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA), any action, including speech, intended to incite religious hatred is punishable by up to seven years' imprisonment. In cases in which a minority group claimed its religious feelings were insulted, the blasphemy laws are rarely enforced, and cases are rarely brought to the legal system. A 2005 law requires that a senior police official investigate any blasphemy charge before a complaint is filed.' **[3k] (Section II: Legal Policy/Framework)**

See also Freedom of religion: [Ahmadis](#)

16.09 The USSD Report 2012 added that:

'The few small, privately owned wire services and media organizations generally practiced self-censorship, especially in news reports involving the military. Private cable and satellite channels also practiced self-censorship at times. The government continued to restrict and censor some published material, while blasphemy and anti-Ahmadi laws restricted publication on certain topics. Foreign books needed to pass government censors before being reprinted, but there were no reports of book bans during the year. Books and magazines could be imported freely but were subject to censorship for objectionable sexual or religious content. Obscene literature, a category the government defined broadly, was subject to seizure.' **[3n] (Section 2a)**

16.10 The BBC's Pakistan profile on the media, updated on 15 July 2012, accessed 30 May 2013, observed that:

'Television is the dominant medium, and there are dozens of private channels. Most viewers watch them via cable; there are no private, terrestrially-broadcast stations. State-run Pakistan Television Corporation (PTV) is the sole national terrestrial broadcaster. More than 100 private FM radio stations are licensed. They are not allowed to broadcast their own news. Scores of unlicensed FM stations are said to operate in the tribal areas of North-West Frontier Province [Khyber Pakhtunkhwa]. Usually operated by clerics, some of the outlets are accused of fanning sectarian tension.

'Pakistan's press is among the most outspoken in South Asia, but its influence is limited by a low level of literacy.' **[35c] (Media)**

16.11 On internet usage, the Freedom House report Freedom on the Net 2012, published 25 September 2012, noted that, according to International Telecommunications Union

(ITU) statistics, ‘... internet penetration in Pakistan stood at close to 9 percent in 2011...’
[5e] (Obstacles to access)

- 16.12 The BBC Pakistan profile stated ‘There were 29.1 million internet users by December 2011 (Internetworldstats.com). The rapid growth in mobile phone use is boosting the delivery of online content.’ **[35c] (Media)**
- 16.13 The Internet Service Providers Association of Pakistan (ISPAK) estimated in its internet facts, updated 26 April 2012, the estimated number of internet users at 25 million.
[106a]
- 16.14 The Freedom on the Net 2012 report went on to say that access to various websites, including YouTube, Flickr and Facebook, had been blocked in the past by either government order or court decisions on account of their ‘blasphemous’ content, pornography or religious morality. However, it appeared that some restrictions were a result of politically motivated censorship. Throughout 2011 and into early 2012 most social networking and blog sites were accessible although some religious groups exerted pressure on the government to ban Facebook completely. **(Obstacles to access)** In contrast, some Islamic militant groups posted comments inciting violence against sexual and religious minorities with few restrictions. **[5e] (Limits on content)**

See also Freedom of religion: [Ahmadis](#)

- 16.15 The USSD Report 2012 noted:
- ‘There were numerous independent English, Urdu, and regional-language daily and weekly newspapers and magazines. To publish within Azad Kashmir, owners of newspapers and periodicals had to obtain permission from the Kashmir Council and the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting controlled and managed the country’s primary wire service, the Associated Press of Pakistan, the official carrier of government and international news to the local media. The military had its own media-monitoring wing within Inter Services Public Relations, the military’s public relations department. The government-owned and -controlled Pakistan Television and Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation operated radio stations throughout the country. The law does not extend to FATA or PATA, and the law allowed independent radio stations to broadcast in FATA with the permission of the FATA Secretariat.
- ‘There were instances in which the government shut down private television channels and blocked certain media outlets from broadcasting. The broadcasters asserted that the broadcast laws were vague, leading to instances of abuse and arbitrary broadcast restrictions by PEMRA. The NGO Intermedia reported that Pakistan Television did not operate under the purview of the law and benefitted from a monopoly on broadcast license fees. According to Freedom House, authorities used the PEMRA rules to silence the broadcast media, by either suspending licenses or threatening to do so.
- ‘Private cable and satellite channels broadcast domestic news and were critical of the government, despite some self-censorship. Private radio stations existed in major cities, but their licenses prohibited news programming. Some channels evaded this restriction by discussing news in talk shows. International radio broadcasts, including the BBC and the Voice of America, were normally available. There is a complete blockade of Indian television news channels.’ **[3n] (Section 2a)**
- 16.16 The USSD IRF Report 2012 added ‘The government does not restrict religious publishing in general; however, the sale of Ahmadiyya religious literature is banned. The

law prohibits publishing any criticism of Islam or its prophets and insults to another's religious beliefs.' **[3k] (Section II: Legal Policy/Framework)**

See also [Death Penalty](#)

Further information on Pakistan's media, its freedom, regulatory framework, and different media groups, can be found in the Initiative for Peacebuilding report, [Media and Governance in Pakistan: A controversial yet essential relationship](#), dated October 2010. **[107a]**

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Journalists

16.17 On 2 May 2013, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) published its annual Impunity Index, which 'identifies countries where journalists are murdered regularly and governments fail to solve the crimes. The 2013 index examines journalist murders that occurred from January 1, 2003, through December 31, 2012, and remain unsolved.' Of the 12 countries on the Index, Pakistan was listed at number 8.

'Pakistan's failure to prosecute a single suspect in the 23 journalist murders over the past decade has pushed it up two spots on the index. A new onslaught of violence came in 2012, with five murders. One of the few cases to progress from investigation to trial was derailed last year when an eyewitness to the 2011 murder of Geo TV reporter Babar was gunned down two days before he was due to testify. Pakistani news media are vibrant and unified in speaking out against impunity; in March, representatives of dozens of outlets and groups began crafting a plan to improve journalist safety as part of the U.N. effort. But any optimism is tempered by a stark reality: CPJ research shows that journalists face an astonishing array of threats, not only from militants and warlords but from military, security, and government officials.' **[74a]**

16.18 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its annual report, 'State of Human Rights in 2012' (HRCP Report 2012), published March 2013, that seven journalists were killed in 2012. The HRCP stated:

'Journalists were targeted in broad daylight and faced repeated threats. Threats made against highly acclaimed journalists indicated a sense of impunity among the perpetrators. The threats that the journalists in Balochistan and FATA faced were the most daunting anywhere in Pakistan. In terms of dangers to journalists, Khuzdar district was to Balochistan what Balochistan was to Pakistan... **(p118)** Impunity for perpetrators of journalists' killings continued in 2012 and no headway was made in apprehending or prosecuting the killers of any of the journalists killed in 2012. Out of the over 80 journalists killed in Pakistan since the year 2000, the perpetrators have been tried only in one case...' **(p124)** The HRCP Report 2012 cited a list of incidents of violence and intimidation against journalists during the year. **[27b] (p119-124)**

16.19 The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) recorded on its website, accessed 26 June 2013, that since 1992, 52 journalists had been killed in Pakistan. **[74b]**

- 16.20 The Freedom House Freedom in the World 2013 – Pakistan report, published 10 June 2013, stated that Pakistan was one of the most dangerous countries for members of the press, and noted:

‘Impunity in cases concerning murdered journalists remains the norm. Intimidation by the security forces – including verbal threats, physical attacks, and arbitrary, incommunicado detention – continues to occur, as do harassment and attacks by Islamic fundamentalists and hired thugs working for feudal landlords or local politicians. A number of reporters covering the conflict between the military and Islamist militants in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (or KP, as NWFP was renamed in 2010) and the FATA were detained, threatened, expelled, or otherwise obstructed in 2012, by either government forces or militants. Conditions for journalists in Balochistan also remained grim.’ **[5a]**

- 16.21 The Human Rights Watch (HRW) World Report 2013, published 31 January 2013, covering 2012 events, stated that ‘... journalists vocally critical of the government experienced less interference from elected officials than in previous years.’ However, HRW continued:

‘At least eight journalists were killed in Pakistan during the year, including four in May alone. On May 9 and 10 respectively, Tariq Kamal and Aurangzeb Tunio were killed. On May 18, the bullet-riddled body of Express News correspondent Razzaq Gul was found dumped in a deserted area near Turbat in Balochistan province. Security agencies are suspected of involvement in his killing. On May 28, Abdul Qadir Hajizai was shot dead in Balochistan by armed men on a motorbike. The Baloch Liberation Front reportedly claimed responsibility for his killing. No one was held accountable in any of these cases.’ **[7i] (Freedom of expression)**

- 16.22 The 2013 report added ‘A climate of fear impedes media coverage of the state security forces and militant groups. Journalists rarely report on human rights abuses by the military in counterterrorism operations, and the Taliban and other armed groups regularly threatened media outlets over their coverage.’ **[7i] (Freedom of expression)**

- 16.23 On 6 August 2012 the UN General Assembly reproduced Pakistan’s ‘National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21’, for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated, with regards to journalists being targeted due to the nature of their work, that;

‘Given the unprecedented level of freedom of media, all cases of intimidation get immediate media attention and are addressed by the Government, the Parliament and the Judiciary. Where required, high-powered commissions have been set up to investigate into allegations of intimidation and harassment.

‘Following the death of journalist Syed Saleem Shahzad, a high level commission was established to enquire into the circumstances of his death and make recommendations. The Commission made several administrative and legislative recommendations to improve the working environment of the media personnel.’ **[83b] (paragraph 117-118)**

- 16.24 For further information on incidents occurring against the media in Pakistan see [Reporters Without Borders \[23b\]](#) and the [Committee to Protect Journalists \(CPJ\) \[74\]](#).

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17. Human rights institutions, organisations and activists

- 17.01 The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, noted that:

‘Domestic and international human rights groups operated without government restriction, investigating and publishing their findings on human rights cases. Other groups that reported on issues implicating the government, military, or intelligence services faced restrictions on their operations. Very few NGOs had access to KP, FATA, and some areas in Balochistan. While government officials were sometimes cooperative, they were only somewhat responsive to these groups’ views. The PPP-led government delayed or blocked issuance of visas to international staff members of organizations whose work challenged the image of the government. There were also reports that security agencies blocked the issuance of visas for international staff members due to concerns about their activities and links to foreign governments.

‘Security threats were a problem for NGO workers due to the instability in FATA and KP, and organizations that promoted women’s rights faced particular challenges.’ **[3n] (Section 5)**

- 17.02 The Human Rights Committee of Pakistan noted in its annual report, the ‘State of Human Rights in 2012’ (HRCP Report 2012), published March 2013, that human rights work in Pakistan remained perilous in 2012, especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). The HRCP cited the deaths of two foreign aid workers, and the killing of nine anti-polio health workers, shot dead by gunmen in a string of attacks across Pakistan over a three day period. **[27b] (p64)**

- 17.03 The Asia Human Rights Commission (AHRC) noted in its report, ‘The State of Human Rights in Pakistan in 2012, (AHRC Report 2012), published 10 December 2012, that:

‘Human rights defenders (HRDs) remain subject to: threats and reprisals against them and their families; harassment; legal and physical attacks; arbitrary arrests and detention; forced disappearance; and torture and extra-judicial killing by state and non-state actors. The government has failed to establish an effective national policy of protection for HRDs or to combat impunity by effectively investigating and prosecuting those responsible for such attacks. The lack of effort to combat impunity mirrors the lack of effort to address the whole range of human rights violations witnessed in Pakistan. And, this, in turn, stems from institutional failings within the police and justice delivery mechanisms, and lack of political will on the part of the government to institute effective institutional reforms. The fact that HRDs expose these failings, places them at particular risk.’ **[52n] (p6)**

- 17.04 The Freedom House Freedom in the World 2013 – Pakistan report, published 10 June 2013, stated that the:

‘Authorities generally tolerate the work of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and allow them to publish critical material. However, NGOs that focus on female education and empowerment, and female NGO staff in general, have faced threats, attacks, and a number of murders by radical Islamists, particularly in the FATA and KP. Citing security concerns, the government has at times prevented aid groups from operating in Balochistan, exacerbating the province’s humanitarian situation, and access to KP and the FATA remains challenging. Working or commenting on issues concerning blasphemy or the intelligence services has become more risky for both local and

international activists, and attacks on human rights defenders also appeared to be on the rise. Pakistan is home to a large number of charitable or cultural organizations, such as the Jamaat-ud-Dawa, that have links to Islamist militant groups.’ **[5a]**

See also [Annex C: Terrorist and extremist groups](#)

- 17.05 The USSD Report 2012 observed that ‘Poor security, intimidation by security forces and militants, and the control the government and security forces exercised over access by nonresidents to FATA continued to make it difficult for human rights organizations and journalists to report on military abuses in the region.’ **[3n] (Section 1g)**

See also [Freedom of speech and media](#)

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18. Corruption

- 18.01 In its 2012 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), published 5 December 2012, Transparency International ranked Pakistan 139 in the world corruption ranking, out of 176 countries, giving it a CPI score of 27. (The CPI ranks countries and territories based on how corrupt their public sector is perceived to be. A country or territory’s score indicates the perceived level of public sector corruption on a scale of 0 - 100, where 0 means that a country is perceived as highly corrupt and 100 means it is perceived as very clean). **[76]**
- 18.02 The Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2012 Human Rights and Democracy Report, published 15 April 2013, stated that ‘Corruption and low standards of integrity plague law enforcement throughout the country and impact on almost all human rights issues as offenders are often able to act with impunity. Reports of mistreatment of those in police custody continue to surface and we see little evidence of the authorities taking these allegations seriously.’ **[11e] (Access to justice and the rule of law)**
- 18.03 The Freedom House Freedom in the World 2013 – Pakistan report, published 10 June 2013, noted that:
- ‘Transparency International’s local branch in Pakistan continued to face harassment and threats over its efforts to monitor the disbursement of foreign aid, as well as to highlight corrupt practices under the Zardari administration. In general, Pakistan has an extremely low level of tax collection, as many of the country’s wealthiest citizens, including members of Parliament, use legal loopholes to avoid paying taxes. A December 2012 report by Pakistan’s Center for Investigative Journalism found that around 70 percent of current lawmakers did not file tax returns the previous year.’ **[5a]**
- 18.04 The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, noted that ‘Corruption was widespread within the government and the police forces, and the government made few attempts to combat the problem.’ **[Executive summary]** The same report added ‘The law provides for criminal penalties for official corruption; however, the government did not implement the law effectively, and officials frequently engaged in corrupt practices. Corruption was pervasive in politics and government, and various politicians and public office holders

faced allegations of corruption, including bribery, extortion, cronyism, nepotism, patronage, graft, and embezzlement.’ **[3n] (Section 4)**

18.05 The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) report, The State of Human Rights in Pakistan 2010 (AHRC Report 2010), published February 2011, noted ‘The corruption in the government has become endemic and with the passage of time the corruption makes new records... No mechanism has been evolved to curb the corruption. The Supreme Court is taking cases of corruption but limited it to the present government not across the board.’ **[52e] (p2)**

18.06 The International Crisis Group (ICG) noted in its report, Reforming Pakistan’s Police, dated 14 July 2008, that:

‘Police officers agree that there is widespread corruption, from petty bribery at the lower rungs of the hierarchy to more substantial graft at the top. In an attempt to justify their force’s shortcomings, they blame the government for failing to take action and also for not addressing its own shortcomings. “How can corruption in the police go down when people known to be corrupt are made its bosses?” asked an officer. “Many in the police, particularly those at the bottom of the pile, feel that when those at the top are making money right, left and centre, what incentive is there for them to remain clean?” This is certainly no justification, but those at the top of the police hierarchy must understand that police professionalism and efficiency and the force’s public image are badly tarnished by such practices... It is nearly impossible to eliminate corruption within the police until poor salaries and working conditions are improved, particularly for personnel of and below the rank of inspector...’ **[20b] (p13)**

18.07 The AHRC Report 2010 noted, with regards to corruption in the judiciary, that it had:

‘... increased from the past year because of the increase in pending cases. To get... to fix [a] date for hearing of... cases [bribing] staff of the court is a common practice, this practice is not limited to lower judiciary but also at the level of higher judiciary... In the lower judiciary the readers are openly telling that amount [(the bribe)] goes to [the] judge also. The lawyers are themselves pressing clients to bribe the staff otherwise their cases would not come. The higher judiciary is silent on the complaints of corruption which is blamed by the lawyer community as the political expediency of the higher judiciary.’ **[52e] (p19)**

18.08 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its annual report, the State of human rights in 2010, published 14 April 2011, that ‘As if reports of rampant corruption by some in the corridors of power were not enough to sully the image of the people’s representatives in general, the issue of forged educational certificates of parliamentarians remained in the limelight in 2010. Dozens of parliamentarians from the treasury and the opposition benches were suspected of or found to be holding forged academic certificates.’ **[27e] (p187)**

See also Section: Security forces, subsection [Police](#)

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National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO)

18.09 The Freedom House Freedom in the World 2013 – Pakistan report, noted that:

‘Corruption is pervasive at all levels of politics and the bureaucracy, and oversight mechanisms to ensure transparency remain weak. Hundreds of politicians, diplomats, and officials, including President Asif Ali Zardari, were granted immunity in ongoing corruption cases under the 2007 National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO). Though the Supreme Court revoked the NRO in 2009 and upheld this decision in a 2011 ruling, prosecution of reopened cases remains uneven and ineffective.’ **[5a]**

18.10 On 21 November 2009 a list containing the names of thousands of people who were protected from corruption charges under the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) was published by the government. In a news conference, Minister of State for Law, Afzal Sindhu, stated that ‘A total of 8,041 people benefitted from NRO, including President Zardari’. More than 30 other politicians were also named on the list. (Agence France Presse (AFP), 21 November 2009) **[69a]**

18.11 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its report, State of Human Rights in 2010 (HRCP Report 2010), published 14 April 2011, that:

‘Early in the year the Supreme Court released its detailed judgment on the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) of 2007. (A short order had been announced at the end of hearing in December 2009.) The following points were made in the leading judgment:

- The Supreme Court had referred the NRO to parliament for being made into an Act. The ordinance was tabled in the National Assembly and then withdrawn. Inference: parliament did not consider the measure a valid temporary legislation.
- The NRO could not be considered a legislation for achieving national reconciliation as it had been promulgated for achieving some individuals’ reconciliation.
- The NRO, to the extent of S-2, was arbitrary and irrational. It failed the test of intelligible differentia too as the measure had served the purpose of individual reconciliation.
- The NRO has opened the door of parliament to persons convicted under National Accountability Ordinance (NAO) and the amendment to NAO is void ab initio. Parliament acted wisely by not validating the NRO and the SC is endorsing the will of the elected representatives.
- The President was not empowered to issue the NRO as the subjects covered by its Ss 2, 6 and 7 fell beyond the scope of the federal and concurrent legislative lists.
- Since the NRO as a whole, particularly its Ss 2, 6 and 7 had been declared void ab initio, for being violative of Arts. 4, 8, 12, 13, 25, 62(f), 63(1) (h), 63(1) (p), 89, 175 and 227 of the constitution, all steps taken and orders passed by any authority or court, including orders for the discharge or acquittal of the accused, were declared never to have existed in the eyes of law and resultantly of no legal effect. Therefore, all cases of the NRO beneficiaries, including cases pending on Oct 5, 2007 stand revived.’ **[27e] (p42)**

18.12 The National Reconciliation Ordinance, was declared ‘null and void’ by the Supreme Court of Pakistan on 16 December 2009. **[99]**

18.13 The USSD Report 2012 stated that after the NRO was declared null and void, the Supreme Court:

'... reopened all 8,000 cases against those who had received amnesty, including the president, ministers, and parliamentarians. In 2010 the Zardari government filed a review petition challenging the Supreme Court's 2009 decision and requesting its review. In 2011 the Supreme Court dismissed the government's review petition, upholding its earlier decision finding the NRO null and void. In November the government complied with an NRO-related directive instructing it to send a letter to the Swiss authorities seeking mutual legal assistance over alleged illicit funds that had been expatriated from Pakistan. Subsequently, the Supreme Court dismissed its review petition of Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf.' **[3n] (Section 4)**

See also Sections: Security Forces, subsection: [Police](#); and Judiciary, subsection [Independence](#) and [Fair Trial](#)

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National Accountability Bureau (NAB)

- 18.14 The USSD Report 2012 noted 'The NAB [National Accountability Bureau] serves as the highest-level anticorruption organization, with a mandate to eliminate corruption through awareness, prevention, and enforcement. Government officials forced the former NAB chairman to resign in June 2010 but did not appoint the new NAB chairman, retired admiral Fasih Bokhari, until October 2011.' **[3n] (Section 4)**
- 18.15 The Freedom House Freedom in the World 2012 – Pakistan, published 22 August 2012, report stated that 'The National Accountability Bureau (NAB), established in 1999 to combat corruption, has been criticized for failing to act on the judiciary's calls for it to reopen hundreds of cases. In late 2011, the opposition denounced Zardari's nomination of an admiral to the post of NAB chairman.' **[5f]**
- 18.16 The NAB's website, accessed 10 August 2011, stated that:
- 'The National Accountability Bureau is Pakistan's apex anti-corruption organization. It is charged with the responsibility of elimination of corruption through a holistic approach of awareness, prevention and enforcement. It operates under the National Accountability Ordinance-1999, with its headquarter at Islamabad. It has four regional offices in the provincial capitals and one at Rawalpindi. It takes cognizance of all offences falling within the National Accountability Ordinance (NAO).' **[29t]**
- 18.17 The HRCP Report 2009 noted that:
- 'Disciplinary action against a large number of police officials was one of the many indications of the poor performance of the law and order personnel. In Punjab, disciplinary action was taken against 1,688 police officials, including DSPs [Deputy Superintendent of Police], SHOs [Station House Officers], inspectors and sub-inspectors, under the orders of the Chief Minister on charges of misconduct and inefficiency during the first 11 months of 2009. The Inspection and Vigilance teams carried out surprise inspection of 136 police stations during the year across Punjab, and discovered cases of illegal detention, torture, registration of false cases, non-registration of cases and defective investigations.'

'According to the IGP [Inspector General of Police], Islamabad, dozens of police officers were suspended during the year 2009 on charges of corruption. Three SHOs of Sialkot police were suspended by the Regional Police Officer (RPO) Gujranwala region on charges of corruption and laziness in duties during December 2009. In the first week of December, the District and Sessions Judge, Karachi South, issued arrest warrants for the SP [Superintendent of Police], Special Investigation Unit (SIU), and other officials for keeping citizens in detention illegally. A court bailiff had raided the SIU centre in Karachi and found four persons illegally detained there.' [27c] (p75-76)

See also Judiciary, [Independence](#) and [Fair Trial](#)

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19. Freedom of religion

19.01 The US Department of State's International Religious Freedom Report for 2012 (USSD IRF Report 2012), published on 20 May 2013, stated in its introduction to Pakistan that:

'The constitution and other laws and policies officially restrict religious freedom and, in practice, the government enforced many of these restrictions. The government's respect for and protection of the right to religious freedom continued to be poor. The government's limited capacity and will to investigate or prosecute the perpetrators of increasing extremist attacks against religious minorities and on members of the Muslim majority promoting tolerance, allowed the climate of impunity to continue. The constitution establishes Islam as the state religion, and it requires that laws be consistent with Islam. The constitution states that "subject to law, public order, and morality, every citizen shall have the right to profess, practice, and propagate his religion." Some government practices, however, limited freedom of religion, particularly for religious minorities. Freedom of speech is constitutionally "subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of the glory of Islam." Abuses under the blasphemy law and other discriminatory laws continued; the government did not take adequate measures to prevent these incidents or reform the laws to prevent abuse. On August 17, police detained on blasphemy charges Rimsha Masih, a Christian girl who reportedly suffered from a mental disability, after a local Muslim cleric alleged that he observed the girl desecrate pages of the Quran. There were instances in which law enforcement personnel reportedly abused religious minorities in custody. At least 17 people are awaiting execution for blasphemy and 20 others are serving life sentences, although to date the government has never carried out an execution for blasphemy.

'There were reports of societal abuses or discrimination based on religious affiliation, belief, or practice. During the year, societal intolerance continued while there were increasing attacks against members of the Shia Muslim community. Human rights and religious freedom advocates and members of minorities reported self-censorship due to a climate of intolerance and fear. Acts of violence and intimidation against religious minorities by violent extremists exacerbated existing sectarian tensions. Violent extremists in some parts of the country demanded that all citizens follow their authoritarian interpretation of Islam and threatened brutal consequences if they did not abide by it.

'Violent extremists also targeted Muslims who advocated tolerance and pluralism. There were scores of attacks on Sufi, Hindu, Ahmadiyya Muslim, Shia, and Christian gatherings and religious sites, resulting in numerous deaths and extensive damage.

Some religious groups protested against public debate about potential amendments to the blasphemy laws or against alleged acts of blasphemy.’ **[3k] (Executive summary)**

19.02 On 13 August 2012, the UN General Assembly published a summarised ‘Compilation [of reports] prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/2 – Pakistan’ for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated ‘The High Commissioner [for Human Rights] noted that forms of entrenched institutional discrimination – with the Ahmadis particularly badly affected – need to be tackled at the legislative, administrative and social levels.’ **[83c] (paragraph 20)**

19.03 The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom Annual Report 2013 (USCIRF Report 2013), published April 2013, covering events from 31 January 2012 to 31 January 2013, has recommended, since 2002, that the US Department of State designate Pakistan as a ‘country of particular concern’ or CPC, and stated that:

‘The exceedingly poor religious freedom environment in Pakistan worsened during the reporting period. The Pakistani government failed to effectively intervene against a spike in targeted violence against the Shi’i Muslim minority community, as well as violence against other minorities. With elections scheduled for May 2013, additional attacks against religious minorities and candidates deemed “un-Islamic” will likely occur. Chronic conditions remain, including the poor social and legal status of non-Muslim religious minorities and the severe obstacles to free discussion of sensitive religious and social issues faced by the majority Muslim community. The country’s blasphemy law, used predominantly in Punjab province but also nationwide, targets members of religious minority communities and dissenting Muslims and frequently results in imprisonment. USCIRF is aware of at least 16 individuals on death row and 20 more serving life sentences. The blasphemy law, along with anti-Ahmadi laws that effectively criminalize various practices of their faith, has created a climate of vigilante violence. Hindus have suffered from the climate of violence and hundreds have fled Pakistan for India. Human rights and religious freedom are increasingly under assault, particularly for women, members of religious minority communities, and those in the majority Muslim community whose views are deemed “un-Islamic.” The government has proven unwilling or unable to confront militants perpetrating acts of violence against other Muslims and religious minorities.’ **[53d] (p118)**

19.04 The same source added that:

‘The government of Pakistan continues to engage in and tolerate systematic, ongoing, and egregious violations of freedom of religion or belief. Sectarian and religiously-motivated violence is chronic, especially against Shi’i [Shia] Muslims, and the government has failed to protect members of religious minority communities, as well as the majority faith. Pakistan’s repressive blasphemy laws and other religiously discriminatory legislation, such as the anti-Ahmadi laws, have fostered an atmosphere of violent extremism and vigilantism. Pakistani authorities have not consistently brought perpetrators to justice or taken action against societal actors who incite violence. Growing religious extremism threatens Pakistan’s security and stability, as well as the freedoms of religion and expression, and other human rights, for everyone in Pakistan.’ **[53d] (p118)**

19.05 The Asian Human Rights Commission reported on 12 March 2012 that:

'The situation in Pakistan grows worse for the religious minority groups on a daily basis. The security and law and order situation has become so chaotic that the authorities seem to have no control over providing protection to these minorities. The fundamentalist Muslim leaders (Mullahs) have a free rein and relentlessly exploit the blasphemy laws for their personal interests and these laws were legislated to debilitate and undermine universal human rights. Members of all faiths have been victims of these merciless violations of human rights including Christians, Hindus and even Shiites. However, the main focus of this brutality is the Ahmadi and the killing of Ahmadis is not considered a crime by the state and the law of the land.' [52j]

19.06 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan observed in its annual report, the 'State of Human Rights in 2012' (HRCP Report 2012), published March 2013, that:

'Harassment of and violence against religious minority communities and not efforts to combat them defined Pakistan in terms of freedom of religious belief in 2012. Nothing during the year suggested that Pakistan had made any headway in ridding itself of pervasive intolerance that undermined the freedom of religious belief and found expression in ever increasing incidents of intimidation and violence against religious and sectarian minorities. While the most severe forms of discrimination were reserved for members of the Hindu, Christian and Ahmadi communities, members of the Shia sect of Islam suffered the highest toll in violence. The systematic killing of the Hazaras of Quetta and the sustained targeted attacks in Karachi did not get the attention they deserved from religious scholars, writers, intellectuals and the media. Besides the increasing level of violence and harassment, the religious minority communities also struggled with safeguarding their rights, on account of lack of codification of personal laws and absence of effective representation in the legislature. A bill to increase the seats reserved for religious minorities in the National Assembly was left pending and allowed to lapse. Many leaders of these communities expressed dissatisfaction over their meagre representation in parliament.

'While statements from political and religious leaders promising respect for rights of religious minorities abounded, so did impunity for the perpetrators of faith-based violence and intolerance. Amid a growing sense of insecurity, a number of accounts were reported of members of religious minority communities trying to leave Pakistan in search of peaceful existence elsewhere.' [27b] (p100)

19.07 The USCIRF Report 2013 observed:

'The government has taken some steps to promote interfaith understanding. After the March 2011 assassination of Federal Minister for Minorities Affairs Shahbaz Bhatti, Prime Minister Gilani appointed his brother, Dr. Paul Bhatti, as the Minister In Charge for the Ministry of National Harmony and Advisor to Prime Minister on inter-faith harmony...

'During the reporting period, Dr. Bhatti and others in the government worked to expand the number of reserved seats for non-Muslim minorities in the National Assembly and provincial assemblies [under the 23rd Amendment]... At the end of the reporting period, the National Assembly had yet to approve the amendment.' [53d] (p128)

19.08 The same source noted:

'It has been difficult to gauge the success of previous efforts taken by the Pakistani government under the late Minister Bhatti. In May 2009, the government announced a

five-percent minimum quota in federal employment for members of religious minority communities. However, it appears that the quota has not been met, and if applied at all, it has been done so unevenly across the country. The government also designated August 11 as an annual federal holiday, called “Minorities’ Day,” which President Zardari celebrated in 2012 for the second time, giving a statement about the importance of religious minorities to Pakistan. Minister Bhatti also established District Interfaith Harmony Committees to promote religious tolerance through understanding in every district of Pakistan. The Pakistani embassy reported that in 2011, 124 interfaith committees have been established at the district level.’ **[53d] (p129)**

19.09 In addition to ‘Minorities’ Day’, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its annual report, State of Human Rights in 2010 (HRCP Report 2010), published 14 April 2011, that ‘In April [2010], the federal ministry of minorities announced that 10 religious festivals of the minorities would be celebrated officially in Pakistan. The festivals included Besakhi, Dewali, Holi, Eid-e-Rizwan, Chelumjust, Nauroz, Christmas and Easter.’ **[27e] (p135)**

19.10 Following a fact-finding mission to Pakistan from 13 – 22 February 2010, the Parliamentary Human Rights Group Report of the PHRG Fact Finding Mission to Pakistan to Examine the Human Rights Situation of the Ahmadiyya Community, published 24 September 2010 (PHRG Report 2010), stated that:

‘In the Pakistan of today, the PHRG finds that the religious minorities are not free. Their mosques and churches are under attack by religious fascists; their members are persecuted and murdered, and there is no hope of improvement for them in the policies of any of the political parties or leaders. The justice system discriminates systematically against the Ahmadiyyas is [sic] particular, from the highest courts down to the local police, and there are only one or two brave voices raised in defence of the victims.’ **[51b] (p3)**

19.11 The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) stated in its report The State of Human Rights in Pakistan 2010 (AHRC Report 2010), published February 2010:

‘Women from religious minorities are most common and vulnerable targets of violence: Women from religious minorities are the most frequent victims of violence, particularly sexual violence. Members of religious minorities are regularly assaulted, tortured or murdered and their property and place of worship are ransacked and desecrated. The blasphemy laws understand blasphemy only as an offence against Islam and are used by a criminal nexus between the police, the administration and religious fundamentalists to intimidate Christians, Ahmadis and all religious minorities in Pakistan. Women are disproportionately affected. It is becoming common in rural areas for Muslim fundamentalists to abduct, force into marriage, and forcibly convert women to Islam. Abductions made up nearly 30 percent of all crimes against women in the first half of 2010.’ **[52e] (p62)**

See also Women: [Violence against women](#)

19.12 The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2009 (USSD Report 2009), published 11 March 2010, observed that ‘Reprisals and threats of reprisals against suspected converts from Islam occurred. Members of religious minorities were subject to violence and harassment, and at times police refused to prevent such actions or charge persons who committed them, leading to an atmosphere of impunity.’ **[3b] (Section 2c)**

See also subsection [Christian converts](#) and the Section: [Security situation](#)

- 19.13 The USCIRF Report 2013 noted that, despite efforts by the Government since mid-2005 to register all religious schools (madrassas) and expel foreign students:

'While most registered, this reportedly has had little if any effect on the curricula, which in many of these schools includes materials that promote intolerance and violence. The government also still lacks full knowledge of the madrassas' sources of funding. In 2010, the Ministry of Interior, which oversees the madrassa system, and the five main madrassa boards signed a memorandum of understanding in another attempt to reform their curriculum and regulate their financing.' **[53d] (p127)**

See also Section: Children – Education – [Madrassas](#)

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Demography

- 19.14 The USSD IRF Report 2012 observed that:

'According to the most recent census, conducted in 1998, 95 percent of the population is Muslim (75 percent of the Muslim population is Sunni and 25 percent Shia). Groups constituting 5 percent of the population or less include Hindus, Christians, Parsis/Zoroastrians, Bahais, Sikhs, Buddhists, and others. While Ahmadi Muslims consider themselves Muslim, the law prohibits them from identifying as such. Other religious groups include Kalasha, Kihals, and Jains. Less than 0.5 percent of the population is silent on religious affiliation or claims not to adhere to a particular religious group. Social pressure is such that few persons claim no religious affiliation.' **[3k] (Section I)**

- 19.15 The News International reported on 4 September 2012 that:

'According to recent National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) statistics, over 2.9 million followers of seven different faiths, besides Islam, live in Pakistan and comprise more than three per cent of all Pakistanis having national identity cards. The break-up of religious minorities in Pakistan shows that the Hindu community is the largest with 1.4 million followers. Christians are second on this list with 1.27 million followers. Then, there are 125,681 Ahmadis or Qadiyanis, over 33,000 Baha'is, 6,146 Sikhs and over 4,000 Zoroastrians or Parsis. Not fewer than 1,500 Pakistani citizens have classified themselves as Buddhists.' **[139a]**

- 19.16 The Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) noted in its report 'The State of Pakistan's Children 2011' (SPARC Report 2011), published July 2012, that:

'It is important to note that given the disadvantages and stigmatization associated with being a minority group, many communities choose not to disclose their religious background. Hence, these statistics may be an underestimate as there are no reliable population figures available for Pakistan's smaller minority communities. With almost 4% of the population, Hindus are equivalent in number to Christians. The largest

minority population lives in Sindh at 2.64 million. Christians and Sikhs live predominantly in Punjab, and Hindus live mostly in rural Sindh with smaller communities elsewhere. Additionally, the Sikhs have smaller traditional communities in Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the tribal areas. Furthermore, there are around 0.34 million scheduled caste Hindus also known as Dalits living in Pakistan. However, according to the representatives of scheduled caste Hindus, there are currently more than two million scheduled caste Hindus residing in the country.' **[71b] (p152)**

19.17 The USSD IRF Report 2010 stated:

'According to the Ministry for Minorities, Sikhs have 30,000 adherents and Buddhists 20,000. According to a Parsi community center in Karachi, the number of Parsis (Zoroastrians) dropped to 1,750 during the year as compared to 2,039 in June 2006. The Bahai stated that their numbers are growing, claiming 30,000 adherents. The number of Ahmadis living in the country, according to Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya, is 600,000, although it is difficult to establish an accurate estimate because Ahmadis, who are legally prohibited from identifying themselves as Muslims, generally choose not to identify themselves as non-Muslims. Some tribes in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPk – formerly known as the North West Frontier Province) practiced traditional animist religious beliefs...' **[3I] (Section I)**

19.18 The Writenet report, 'Pakistan: The Situation of Religious Minorities', dated May 2009, commissioned by the UNHCR and written by Shaun R. Gregory and Simon R. Valentine, estimated there were three to four million Christians (about two to three per cent of the population) living in Pakistan, with an approximate equal split between Protestants and Catholics. Some sources estimated the number of Christians to be at least twice the official number. The report noted 'Approximately 80 percent of Christians live in the Punjab, with around 14 percent in Sindh, 4 percent in the NWFP, and 2 percent in Balochistan.' **[108a] (p17)**

19.19 The same source estimated the number of Hindus living in Pakistan was two and a half million. **[108a] (p21)**

19.20 The Government of Pakistan's Statistics Division provided in its Population Census of 1998 a breakdown of Pakistan's Population by Religion. **[29r]**

Constitution and legislation

19.21 The USSD IRF Report 2012 stated that 'The constitution establishes Islam as the state religion. Although it also declares that adequate provisions shall be made for minorities to profess and practice their religious beliefs freely, other provisions of the constitution and laws impose limits on this right.' **[3k] (Section II: Legal/Policy Framework)**

19.22 The USCIRF 2013 Report noted that, under what would be the 23rd amendment to the Pakistan constitution:

'...the National Assembly would gain four seats for non-Muslim minorities, bringing the total to 14. In provincial assemblies, the number of reserved seats in each would increase at different rates; the Punjab provincial assembly would see an increase of 10 for a total of 18, Sindh increase by 12 for a total of 21, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan would both have their current 3 seats increased by an additional 4 for a total of 7 each. These increases address concerns that previous increases in reserved seats under the 18th amendment in 2010 did not reflect the size of the non-Muslim

community. At the end of the reporting period, the National Assembly had yet to approve the amendment.’ **[53d] (p128)**

19.23 The same source noted that under the 18th amendment ‘... the Ministry of Minorities Affairs was removed from the federal cabinet and devolved to the provinces. It is unclear whether all provinces have established a Minority Affairs Ministry, and if so, what level of funding and support they receive from the provincial government. Sindh has reportedly done so and Punjab province already had a ministry that focused on minority concerns and human rights.’ **[53d] (p129)**

19.24 The USSD IRF Report 2012 noted:

‘Government policies do not afford the same protections to members of minority religious groups as they do to the majority religious group... The 2008 establishment of the Ministry for Minorities removed responsibility for protection of religious minorities from the Ministry of Religious Affairs. In 2011, the government dissolved the Federal Ministry for Minorities as part of the national devolution plan under the 18th Amendment to the constitution. Responsibilities are now under the purview of the provinces. In 2011, the government created the Ministry of National Harmony, a stand-alone, cabinet-level body responsible for the oversight of policy and legislation regarding interfaith harmony, international agreements relating to religious freedom and interfaith harmony, and commitments with respect to all religious communities. The budget of the ministry covers assistance to indigent minorities, the repair of minority places of worship, the establishment of minority-run small development projects, and the celebration of minority religious festivals.

‘The Ministry of Religious Affairs is primarily responsible for organizing participation in the Hajj and other Islamic religious pilgrimages. The federal government, however, also consults the ministry on matters such as blasphemy and educational reforms.’ **[3k] (Section II: Legal/Policy Framework)**

19.25 The USCIRF Report 2013 observed that discriminatory legislation introduced in previous decades had fostered an atmosphere of religious intolerance and undermined the social and legal status of religious minorities, including members of the Shia, Ahmadi, Hindu and Christian communities. The report also noted that:

‘Government authorities do not adequately protect members of religious minority communities from societal violence, and rarely bring perpetrators of attacks on minorities to justice. This impunity is partly due to the fact that Pakistan’s democratic institutions, particularly the judiciary and the police, have been weakened by endemic corruption, ineffectiveness, and a general lack of accountability. Also important are the suspected links between Pakistan’s army and intelligence service with militants who target religious minorities.’ **[53d] (p119)**

19.26 The Indian Institute of Dalit Studies (IDSN) Briefing Note – Pakistan 2012, noted:

‘While there are constitutional safeguards in place to prohibit caste-based discrimination in Pakistan, the GOP has not made a serious effort to implement or enforce those laws. Despite its commitment to give “maximum support” to addressing this issue in the first UPR in 2008, the GOP has taken no specific action aimed at eliminating the practice of discrimination on the basis of caste or eradicating poverty among Scheduled Castes. Scheduled Caste populations in Pakistan continue to suffer high degree of poverty, as no major scheme has been launched for this group.’ **[143a] (p2)**

19.27 The HRCP Report 2010 stated:

‘There are few specific mechanisms to redress complaints of members of minority communities. Although a Commission for Minorities exists in name it is not known how it operates to safeguard the rights of the minorities, who its present members are, and how they are appointed. The incumbent commission has been criticised for neither being independent nor autonomous. HRCP Working Group on Communities Vulnerable Because of their Beliefs has called for the Commission for Minorities to be a statutory body, established by an act of parliament, which must have the mandate to address discrimination against minorities in laws, policies and practices. It has been suggested that the commission should have the power to receive and entertain complaints and take all measures necessary to address those complaints, including by referring matters to courts.’ **[27e] (p136)**

19.28 The USSD Report 2009 added that ‘The prime minister, federal ministers, and ministers of state, as well as elected members of the Senate and National Assembly (including non-Muslims), must take an oath to “strive to preserve the Islamic ideology,” the basis for the creation of the country.’ **[3b] (Section 2c)**

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Blasphemy laws

19.29 The AHRC Report 2010 stated ‘... Pakistan’s infamous Blasphemy Laws remain in effect. Charges of blasphemy are still punishable with the death penalty, while desecration of the Holy Quran carries a life sentence.’ **[52e] (p85)** The USSD IRF Report 2012 stated ‘Authorities continued to use the blasphemy laws against Muslims, Christians, Ahmadiyya Muslims, and members of other groups.’ **[3k] (Section II: Government practices)**

19.30 The Parliamentary Human Rights Group report ‘Rabwah: A Place for Martyrs?’ (PHRG Report 2007), published in January 2007, provided a tabulated summary of the blasphemy laws and the penalties for breaching them:

Pakistan Penal Code	Description	Penalty
298a	Use of derogatory remarksetc., in respect of holy personages	Three years’ imprisonment, or fine, or both
298b	Misuse of epithets, descriptions and titles etc., reserved for certain holy personages or places, by Ahmadis	Three years’ imprisonment and fine
298c	An Ahmadi, calling himself a Muslim, or preaching or propagating his faith, or outraging the religious feelings of Muslims, or posing himself as a Muslim	Three years’ imprisonment and fine
295	Injuring or defiling places of worship, with intent to insult the religion of any class	Up to two years’ imprisonment or fine, or both
295a	Deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings of any class	Up to 10 years’ imprisonment, or fine, or

	by insulting its religion or religious beliefs	both
295b	Defiling, etc., of Holy Quran	Imprisonment for life
295c	Use of derogatory remarks, etc; in respect of the Holy Prophet	Death and fine

[51a] (p10, Section 2.3, Blasphemy Laws and First Information Reports)

- 19.31 The USSD IRF Report 2012 noted that ‘Freedom of speech was subject to “reasonable restrictions in the interest of the glory of Islam,” as stipulated in sections 295(a), (b), and (c) of the penal code... In cases in which a minority group claimed its religious feelings were insulted, the blasphemy laws are rarely enforced, and cases are rarely brought to the legal system.’ **[3k] (Section II: Legal/Policy Framework)**
- 19.32 On 23 November 2010, in requesting the repeal of Pakistan’s blasphemy laws, Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported:

‘Legal discrimination against religious minorities and the failure of Pakistan’s federal and provincial governments to address religious persecution by Islamist groups effectively enables atrocities against these groups and others who are vulnerable. The government seldom brings charges against those responsible for such violence and discrimination. Research by Human Rights Watch indicates that the police have not apprehended anyone implicated in such activity in the last several years.

‘Social persecution and legal discrimination against religious minorities has become particularly widespread in Punjab province. Human Rights Watch urged the provincial government, controlled by former prime minister Nawaz Sharif’s Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) party, to investigate and prosecute as appropriate campaigns of intimidation, threats, and violence against Christians, Ahmadis, and other vulnerable groups.’ **[7e]**

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Misuse of blasphemy laws

- 19.33 On 6 August 2012 the UN General Assembly reproduced Pakistan’s ‘National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21’, for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated:

‘We share concerns about instances of misuse of the “Blasphemy Law”, which is neutral in nature. There have been instances of misuse of this law by vested interests. There is a misunderstanding that this law is used to target minorities. The fact is that it is generally invoked against people of all faiths, mostly Muslims, to settle personal disputes. Cases involving minorities generally get more media and public attention.

‘Government has taken measures to address these abuses. The law provides that investigation of a case of blasphemy shall be conducted by a police officer not below the rank of Superintendent of Police. The police deal with these cases with the attention these deserve. High Courts invariably overturn any case of wrongful conviction. We will continue to protect the rights of all citizens including the minorities and preventing any misuse or abuse of the blasphemy law, while also ensuring respect for the laws of the country.’ **[83b] (paragraph 76-77)**

19.34 The Asian Human Rights Commission, commenting on the speech made by Pakistan's foreign minister, Ms. Rabbani Khar, at the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on Pakistan, stated on 4 November 2012 that:

'The religious affiliations of the ordinary people are judged and controlled by the operation of this [blasphemy] law. The law authorises any person to accuse someone of blasphemy for any petty reason that might suit him or her. The minister totally ignored the consequences of the blasphemy law and made no mention about the deaths caused by religious extremists due to the misuse of this law. Since 2008 almost all the member states of the UN HRC [UN Human Rights Council] have been requesting Pakistan to repeal this law.' **[52m]**

19.35 The HRCP Report 2012 stated 'The government did not at all discuss the issue of blasphemy law reform in 2012. Nothing was done to protect the minority communities from vigilantes whose religious sensitivities did not wait for the law to take its course, nor to confirm if charges such as blasphemy or desecration of holy books were even true.' **[27b] (p100)**

19.36 The USSD IRF Report 2012 noted that some individuals brought charges under the blasphemy laws 'to settle personal scores or to intimidate vulnerable individuals.' The report added:

'Lower courts often did not adhere to basic evidentiary standards in blasphemy cases, which led to some accused and convicted persons spending years in jail before higher courts eventually overturned their convictions and ordered them freed. Trial courts usually denied bail in blasphemy cases, claiming that because defendants could face the death penalty, they were likely to flee. Judges and magistrates, seeking to avoid confrontation with or violence from extremists, often continued trials indefinitely. Lower courts conducted proceedings in an atmosphere of intimidation by violent extremists and refused bail due to fear of reprisal. While the law requires that a senior police official investigate any blasphemy charge before a complaint is filed, this was not uniformly enforced.' **[3k] (Section II: Restrictions on Religious Freedom)**

19.37 The USCIRF Report 2013 stated that:

'Blasphemy allegations, which are often false, have resulted in the lengthy detention of, and occasional violence against, Christians, Ahmadis, Hindus, other religious minorities, and members of the Muslim majority community. Reportedly, more cases are brought under these provisions against Muslims than any other faith group, although the law has a greater impact per capita on minority religious faiths. While no one has been executed under the blasphemy law, the law has created a climate of vigilantism that has resulted in societal actors killing accused individuals.' **[53d] (p125)**

19.38 The same source added:

'Despite the law's national application, two-thirds of all blasphemy cases reportedly are filed in Punjab province. Because the law requires neither proof of intent nor evidence to be presented after allegations are made, and includes no penalties for false allegations, blasphemy charges are commonly used to intimidate members of religious minorities or others with whom the accusers disagree or have business or other conflicts. The provisions also provide no clear guidance on what constitutes a violation, empowering the accuser and local officials to rely on their personal interpretations of Islam. In addition, blasphemy offenses are considered cognizable, so that the police file charges

and can arrest without a warrant. And blasphemy is a non-compoundable crime, a category that does not allow for out-of-court settlements. Consequently, once a charge is filed, it is difficult for the case to be quashed, and the accuser cannot simply drop the charges.' [53d] (p125)

19.39 The PHRG Report 2010 stated that 'The State of Pakistan is failing at all levels to address the problem of malicious complaints of violations of the blasphemy law being pursued against Ahmadis and Christians, as well as members of other religious communities.' [51b] (p8)

See also sub section [Christians](#) and [Ahmadis](#)

19.40 The same source continued:

'These failures start with the police, who, in many cases, fail to exercise independent judgment in the use of their powers in the following areas:

- the decision to accept a First Information Report (the commencement of the legal
- process in a criminal case).
- the decision to arrest the accused.
- the decision to keep the accused in custody.
- the decision to charge the accused and present him to the court...

(The injustices of such police actions are deepened by frequent instances of poor physical treatment of accused persons by police officers.)

'The prosecutors engaged by the Advocate-General Departments of the Provincial Governments in many cases fail to:

- exercise independent judgment when continuing these cases in the courts.
- apply, with an independent mind, a review of the strength of the evidence or of the public interest test in continuing such cases.

'The judges in all courts, especially the lower ones, in many cases fail to:

- deal with these cases expeditiously, resulting in long delays and adjournments
- to grant bail in many cases and then only after long delays and appeals to the Higher Courts.

'The Government and Parliament are failing to:

- reform the law by repealing it or at very minimum reducing its discriminatory impact.

'As a result, at all levels of the State there is a failure to deter the promotion of religious intolerance, which is visible in that

- Incitements made by religious extremists to murder Ahmadis and Christians go unchecked and unpunished.
- Persons who have made manifestly groundless allegations of violations of the blasphemy law against Ahmadis and others are not prosecuted for their falsehoods.

- state actors at all levels frequently appear fearful of the power and influence of Muslim extremists and are being paralysed by a small minority of extremist preachers and their supporters.' **[51b] (p9-10)**

See also Judiciary: [Fair trial](#)

- 19.41 The AHRC Report 2011 stated that the killings of former governor, Salman Taseer, and former federal minister, Shahbaz Bhatti:

'... started after the open threats from the religious leaders and mosque leaders (Imams) for the killing of those persons who are against the blasphemy law or supporting the accused persons who committed the blasphemy. The Muslim religious have also announced head money for the killings and reservation of killers in the paradise. The civil society was very critical of such threats but the government and law enforcement authorities did not take action against such religious leaders who got impunity by the government machineries. The government has not enforced the law against the misuse of loudspeakers from the mosques. According to law of 2004 the loudspeakers from the mosque can be used only for the Friday sermons and Azan, five times calling for prayers. But throughout the country the mosques are using loudspeakers to preach their hate messages and authorities remain silent.' **[52g] (p39)**

- 19.42 The same source added:

'On 9 January 2011, a rally was organised by Tahaffauz-e-Namoos-e-Risalat, which is a conglomerate of religious parties, opposed to amendments of the country's blasphemy laws... The rally, while demonstrating against the amendments also showed support for the assassin [of Salman Taseer], Mumtaz Quadri. "He is a hero and we salute his courage," the speakers declared. It is known that more than 3,000 police officers were present, supposedly to maintain law and order. However, when the speakers announced over their public address system that anyone showing support for the amendments to the blasphemy laws should face the same fate as Salman Taseer no officer or government official moved to silence them. The vast majority of the participants were students from the Madrassas. One of the speakers was a member of the banned organisation, Jamaat-ud-Dawa which is banned by both Pakistan and the United States; however, once again, no move was made to prevent him from publically representing this banned organisation.' **[52g] (p39)**

- 19.43 The HRCP Report 2010 cited:

'Vigilantes and radical elements continued to treat as fair game anyone accused of blasphemy, or anyone voicing support for such accused. In addition to often not doing enough to protect minorities from attacks, the police have also been accused of harassing or being complicit in framing false charges against members of religious minorities. Prejudices among law enforcement personnel were also believed to be a hurdle in effective protection of religious minorities in serious danger from the Taliban and sectarian militant groups.' **[27e] (p124)**

- 19.44 The USSD Report 2009 observed that:

'Complaints under the blasphemy laws were used to harass rivals in business or personal disputes. Most complaints under these laws were filed against the majority Sunni Muslim community by other Sunnis. Appellate courts dismissed most blasphemy

cases; the accused, however, often remained in jail for years awaiting the court's decision. Trial courts were reluctant to release on bail or acquit blasphemy defendants for fear of violence from extremist religious groups. In 2005 a law went into effect revising the complaint process and requiring senior police officials to review such cases in an effort to eliminate spurious charges. According to human rights and religious freedom groups, this process was not effective because senior police officers did not have the resources to review the cases.' **[3b] (Section 2c)**

- 19.45 The Freedom House special report 'Policing Belief: The Impact of Blasphemy Laws on Human Rights', noted that 'The low evidentiary threshold required to register cases of blasphemy, coupled with the sensitive nature of the crime, exacerbates the laws' potential for abuse.' **[5c] (p75)**
- 19.46 On 3 February 2011, The Guardian reported:
- 'A Pakistani MP spearheading reform of the country's controversial blasphemy laws has abandoned her struggle, accusing her own party of caving in to extremists.
- 'However, Pakistan People's Party MP Sherry Rehman, who is largely confined to her home following a flurry of death threats, denied government claims that she had voluntarily withdrawn a bill proposing changes to the law. "There was no question of my withdrawing the bill as the speaker [of parliament] never admitted it on the agenda," she said, adding that the "appeasement of extremists will have a blow-back effect".
- 'Under pressure from religious clerics, prime minister Yousaf Raza Gilani told parliament on Wednesday that his government would not touch the legislation, which human rights groups say is routinely abused to persecute minorities and settle personal scores. "We are all unanimous that nobody wants to change the law," he said.' **[113a]**
- 19.47 The report noted further that 'Although cases against Christians get much of the attention, the bulk of the law's victims are Muslim.' **[113a]**
- 19.48 The PHRG Report 2010 noted that its fact-finding mission found '...Ahmadis, as well as members of other religions, are frequently charged with the offence of blasphemy, on grounds which are often spurious in the extreme. It appears that many convictions, though by no means all, are over-turned on appeal. However, by then the successful appellants have spent many years behind bars.' **[51b] (p19)**
- 19.49 The Freedom House special report 'Policing Belief: The Impact of Blasphemy Laws on Human Rights', noted that:
- '... the ratio of Muslims to non-Muslims among blasphemy defendants illustrates the extent to which these laws are used to persecute religious minorities. Pakistan's minister for minority affairs, Shahbaz Bhatti [deceased], has publicly argued that "the blasphemy law is being used to terrorize minorities in Pakistan." Ahmadis are the most affected, followed by Christians. However, Muslims are not exempt. Almost half of all blasphemy cases lodged over the last two decades have been against Muslims, including both Sunnis and Shiites... However, the use of blasphemy laws against Sunni and Shiite Muslims does not appear to be based on sectarian differences so much as personal disputes.' **[5c] (p77)**
- 19.50 The Freedom House Freedom in the World 2013 – Pakistan report, published 10 June 2013, stated that:

‘Incidents in which police take bribes to file false blasphemy charges against Ahmadis, Christians, Hindus, and occasionally Muslims continue to occur, with several dozen cases reported each year. No executions on blasphemy charges have been carried out to date, but accusations or the charges alone can lead to years of imprisonment, ill-treatment in custody, and extralegal persecution by religious extremists or mob violence... Religious hard-liners have argued that even advocacy of reforming the blasphemy laws constitutes an act of blasphemy.’ **[5a]**

See also Judiciary: [Blasphemy Laws](#)

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Blasphemy cases

- 19.51 Listing the blasphemy cases filed in 2012, the HRCP Report 2012, published March 2013, noted:

‘Twenty-three cases against 27 Muslims, two of them women, were registered in 2012 for offences relating to religion. Eight of them were charged under the blasphemy provision – 295-C of the PPC – and the rest under other sections. Fifteen of the 26 cases, in which the address of the accused was available, were from Punjab, five from Sindh, and one each from Islamabad and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa.

‘Two of the accused were burnt to death, one in Punjab and the other one in Sindh. As regards the cases initiated before 2012, one accused was acquitted, another was sentenced to death, two were awarded life imprisonment, and one was given imprisonment for 25 years.’ **[27b] (p49-50)**

- 19.52 The same source added:

‘During the year, seven fresh cases on religious grounds excluding the Rimsha case were registered against as many members of the Christian community – three of them under Sec 295-C. Six of these cases were registered in Punjab and one in Sindh (Karachi). Five new cases on religious grounds were registered against members of the Ahmediya community during 2012, all of them under sec 298-C of the PPC except one under 295-A and all of them in Punjab.’ **[27b] (p53-54)**

- 19.53 According to the National Commission for Justice and Peace (NCJP), 30 cases were registered under the blasphemy laws between January and November 2012. ‘Of these, 11 were against Christians, five against Ahmadis, and 14 against Muslims. The NCJP reported that authorities registered a total of 1,170 blasphemy cases between 1987 and 2012.’ (USSD IRF Report 2012) **[3k] (Section II)**

- 19.54 An April 2013 report, on Pakistan’s blasphemy laws, by the Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), stated:

‘... between 1987 and Aug. 2012 we have seen almost 247 blasphemy cases registered or raised, directly affecting lives of 435 persons approximately. Moreover, figures suggest that since 1990, 52 people have been extra-judicially murdered, for being implicated in blasphemy charges. Among these were 25 Muslims, 15 Christians, five Ahmadis, one Buddhist and a Hindu. The known blasphemy cases in Pakistan show that from 1953 to July 2012, there were 434 offenders of blasphemy laws in Pakistan and

among them were, 258 Muslims (Sunni/Shia), 114 Christians, 57 Ahmadis, and 4 Hindus.’ **[59d] (p5)**

19.55 The Freedom House special report Policing Belief: The Impact of Blasphemy Laws on Human Rights, published October 2010, noted that ‘According to data compiled by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and cited by the U.S. State Department, a total of 695 people were accused of blasphemy in Pakistan between 1986 and April 2006. Of those, 362 were Muslims, 239 were Ahmadis, 86 were Christians, and 10 were Hindus. The Pakistani daily newspaper Dawn has reported that some 5,000 cases were registered between 1984 to 2004, and 964 people were charged with blasphemy.’ **[5c] (p69)**

19.56 The CRSS blasphemy laws report cited a list of blasphemy cases that had been acquitted by the courts, between 1990 to July 2012, as identified via various media sources and court records. **[59d] (p47-49)**

19.57 The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Armed Conflict Database stated in its section on Pakistan (Sectarian violence), Annual Report 2012 – Human Security Developments, that:

‘Pakistan’s blasphemy laws came under intensive debate when a Christian girl with a learning disability was detained in August after being accused of burning pages of the Quran. The investigations revealed that a local Imam had planted the Quran pages in her bag. Although the chairman of the All Pakistan Ulema Council, a national council of religious scholars in Pakistan, apologised and vowed to protect the victim, the incident demonstrated the difficulties faced by religious minorities in Pakistan. While many welcomed the statement by the head of council of religious scholars, it is unlikely that these developments will lead to changes in blasphemy laws. The girl was finally released on 23 September and given state protection at an undisclosed location.’ **[137a]**

19.58 The USCIRF Report 2013 stated:

‘Before the Rimsha case, the highest-profile blasphemy case in recent years involved Aasia Bibi, a Christian farm worker and mother of five, who was sentenced to death under Article 295C in November 2010. She remains in jail while her case is on appeal. NGOs report that Ms. Bibi’s health has been affected from being kept separate from the prison population. Her family is in hiding.

‘Two individuals were sentenced to death during the reporting period [31 January 2012 to 31 January 2013]: Sufi Ishaque and Hazrat Ali Shah (the latter was also sentenced to 10 years in prison). These individuals join 14 others USCIRF is aware of on death row for alleged blasphemy. In addition, USCIRF received reports of an additional 20 individuals serving life sentences. Manzarul Haq Shah Jahan was sentenced to life in prison and a fine of 200,000 rupees during the reporting period. In addition, USCIRF has received reports of more than 40 individuals currently in jail for violating the blasphemy law...

‘The accusation of blasphemy can lead to acts of violence perpetrated by societal actors. In April, an elderly man was shot dead in Punjab, after being acquitted by a court from blasphemy charges and released from prison. Also shocking was the mob attack in June on Ghulam Abbas, a Sunni Muslim accused of blasphemy. He was pulled from a police station in Punjab province, beaten to death, and his body burned.

'On January 17, 2013, the Pakistani Supreme Court accepted a petition filed against the Pakistani ambassador to the United States, Sherry Rehman, over allegedly blasphemous comments made two years ago while speaking on television about Aasia Bibi's sentencing under the country's blasphemy laws. Police were instructed by the two judge panel to collect evidence.' **[53d] (p126)**

See also sub section [Christians](#) and [Ahmadis](#)

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Legal procedure for blasphemy charges

19.59 The USCIRF Report 2013 stated '... blasphemy offenses are considered cognizable, so that the police file charges and can arrest without a warrant. And blasphemy is a non-compoundable crime, a category that does not allow for out-of-court settlements. Consequently, once a charge is filed, it is difficult for the case to be quashed, and the accuser cannot simply drop the charges.' **[53d] (p125)**

19.60 The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) consulted the National Commission for Justice and Peace (NCJP), a Christian-based human rights organisation in Pakistan, on the procedures for bringing a blasphemy charge against an Ahmadi. A legal expert at the NCJP gave the following responses, in an [email](#) dated 2 October 2008, to questions asked by the UK Border Agency (UKBA):

'UKBA: What is the procedure for an individual to initiate a complaint against an Ahmadi (or any other person) directly with a Magistrates' court?

'NCJP: Anyone agreived [sic] by some illegal action or privy to information about a crime can register a complaint (FIR) [First Information Report] with the police. In case there is no crime, or the police happen to be the first... [to] know, the police can become a complainant too.

'If the police refuse to register a FIR on a complaint, the district and sessions judge (not a magistrate) can order [a] registration of a FIR under article 199 of the constitution / section 154 of criminal procedure code, which is the prosecution[']s... [account] to be substantiated [sic] by inquiry / investigation report. "Challan" is the formal charge framed in a court.

'Section 196 of the criminal procedure code makes the registration of certain FIRs hard, requiring an inquiry by a senior police officer (in case of Section 295 b and c, a suprintendant [sic] [this section relates to defiling the Koran and making derogatory remarks against the "prophet" respectively])

'This is the law however in case of blasphemy allegations, we have seen... [the law] violated and procedures ignored on one pretext or the other.

'UKBA: Once such a complaint has been lodged, what procedure does the court follow, and what are the timescales for such actions?

'NCJP: The charge is framed, [the] accused can deny [the charges]... [then the] standard procedure... [for] evidence, witnesses, cross examination takes place - if the

offense is bailable the court may also grant bail whenever requested. [This is followed by]... the judgement, [and an] appeal against the verdict if felt necessary.

'298-c, however, is non-bailable unless the accused can successfully contest that the offense is unfounded or cannot be substantiated. This can happen at investigation or trial.

'UKBA: Who is the court permitted to release documents to with regard to such a complaint?

'NCJP: All parties to the case have the right to acquire documents from any court of law, even the press can manage [to obtain] the copies of FIRs and decisions.' **[11i]**

19.61 The PHRG Report 2010 noted that:

'The Mission heard that once a criminal complaint has been filed (called a First Information Report), there is very little scope for the prosecution to evaluate the strength or merits of the accusation. Almost invariably, the FIR will lead to a full trial, even if both prosecutor and judge deem the charge to be unsubstantiated. A number of interlocutors also complained that third parties, in particular mullahs, were able to influence blasphemy cases. Additionally, a number of interlocutors pointed out that the only penalty for blasphemy law under section 295C, namely the use of derogatory remarks etc in respect of the Holy Prophet, is death, but that this sentence was rarely imposed, thus making the legislation inherently contradictory.' **[51b] (p24)**

See also Section: [Arrest and Detention – Legal Rights](#)

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Hudood Ordinances

19.62 The USSD IRF Report 2012 observed that:

'The Federal Shariat Court and the Sharia bench of the Supreme Court serve as appellate courts for certain convictions in criminal courts under the Hudood Ordinance (an ordinance enacted in 1979 to implement Islamic law), including those for rape, extramarital sex, alcohol, and gambling. The Federal Shariat Court exercises "revisional jurisdiction" (the power to review of its own accord cases in lower courts) that applies to Muslims and non-Muslims, in cases relating to Hudood laws. Non-Muslims are allowed to consult the Federal Shariat Court in other matters that affect them or violate their rights if they so choose.' **[3k] (Section II)**

See Sections: Judiciary: [Hudood Ordinances](#) and Women: [Women's Protection Act](#)

Anti-terrorist laws

19.63 The USSD IRF Report 2012 stated that under the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) '... any action, including speech, intended to incite religious hatred is punishable by up to seven years' imprisonment. In cases in which a minority group claims its religious feelings were insulted, the blasphemy laws are rarely enforced, and cases are rarely brought to the legal system. The law requires that a senior police official investigate any

blasphemy charge before a complaint is filed.’ **[3k] (Section II: Legal/Policy Framework)**

See also Section: Judiciary: [Anti-Terrorist Act and Courts](#)

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Apostasy

- 19.64 An [email](#) regarding apostasy to the UK Border Agency from the Foreign and Commonwealth (FCO) Office British High Commission in Pakistan, dated 9 January 2009, stated that although apostasy was not illegal, people who change their faith are regularly charged with blasphemy and insulting Islam. The FCO noted that ‘This is usually when a conversion is made to an entirely separate religion (e.g. becoming Christian). Arguably a Sunni Muslim becoming Shia is a conversion of belief within a single religion... [but] we are not currently aware of examples of blasphemy legal proceedings against Shias by Sunnis.’ **[11d]**
- 19.65 As stated in the USSD IRF Report 2012 ‘Conversion to minority religious beliefs generally took place in secret to avoid societal backlash.’ **[3k] (Section III)**
- 19.66 On 9 May 2007, Asianews reported that a draft bill on apostasy had been adopted in its first reading by the National Assembly and had been put before a parliamentary standing committee for consideration. The article stated that ‘Tabled by a six-party politico-religious alliance, the Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal or MMA, the Apostasy Act 2006 which the government sent to the committee would impose the death penalty on Muslim men and life in prison on Muslim women in case they leave Islam. It would also force them to forfeit their property and lose legal custody of children.’ **[54a]** An official at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), British High Commission, Islamabad, stated in a [letter](#) dated 29 November 2010, that ‘The [Apostasy] Bill failed to emerge from Committee before the dissolution of the National Assembly in 2007. The MMA boycotted the elections, eventually held in early 2008, and the alliance crumbled. They have no meaningful parliamentary base in the current Assembly.’ **[11m]**
- 19.67 The Pew Research Center, a US-based non-partisan ‘fact tank’, and publisher of the Pew Global Attitudes Project, which conducts public opinion surveys around the world, presented its findings from a survey, Concern About Extremist Threat Slips in Pakistan, dated 29 July 2010. The survey was based on 2,000 face-to-face interviews conducted from 13 April to 28 April 2010 in predominantly urban areas of Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. Covering the subject of religion, law and society, when asked (of Muslim’s only) ‘Do you favor or oppose the death penalty for people who leave the Muslim religion?’, 76 per cent voted in favour. **[120a] (Chapter 4)**
- 19.68 The survey added ‘... those who identify with fundamentalists are much more likely than those who side with the modernizers to support harsh punishments under the law. For example, 88% of those who say they identify with Islamic fundamentalists favor the death penalty for people who leave the Muslim religion, compared with 67% of those who side with the modernizers.’ **[120a] (Chapter 4)**
- 19.69 In another survey, Pakistani Public Opinion: Growing Concerns About Extremism, Continuing Discontent With U.S., dated 13 August 2009, the Pew Global Attitudes Project stated that of the 1,254 people questioned in the four provinces of Pakistan,

from 22 May to 9 June 2009, 78 per cent supported the death penalty for people leaving Islam. The survey noted ‘Support for strict punishments is equally widespread among men and women, old and young, and the educated and uneducated.’ **[120b] (p14)**

See also [Christian converts](#)

Interfaith marriage

- 19.70 In an [email](#) dated 24 June 2008, the FCO British High Commission (BHC), Islamabad, stated that in Islam a Muslim woman and a non-Muslim man cannot marry. If such a couple were to have a child, that child would be considered illegitimate on the grounds that the parents would not, and could not, be legally married. Should a Muslim woman marry a non-Muslim it would be considered adultery. The BHC went on to say that the Islamic punishment for adultery is stoning to death although in reality the penalty would be at least a lengthy prison sentence and ‘considerable social stigma’. **[11h]**
- 19.71 The USSD IRF Report 2012 noted ‘Marriages generally are performed and registered according to one's religious group; however there was no legal mechanism in place for the government to register marriages of Hindus and Sikhs. The marriages of non-Muslim men remained legal upon conversion to Islam.’ **[3k] (Section II)**
- 19.72 The USSD Report 2011 stated ‘Some attacks against minority groups were in protest of interfaith marriages or relationships.’ **[3p] (Section III)**
- 19.73 The Australian Government Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT), Country Advice Pakistan, on love marriages, dated 17 November 2010, quoted Dr Shakira Hussein, a fellow at the Australian National University, as saying, in December 2009 ‘In instances where the male partner to the marriage was from an ill-regarded community or caste then he, as much as the female partner to the marriage, could likely find himself the subject of a violent reprisal.’ **[134a] (p1-2)**

See also subsection [Hindus and Sikhs](#) and Women: [Love marriages](#)

- 19.74 International Christian Concern (ICC) reported, in an article dated 6 June 2008, of the death threats received by a Muslim man from Muslim extremists because he had acted as a witness in a marriage between a Christian man and Muslim woman. The witness was accused of participating in an ‘un-Islamic activity’ and a fatwa was issued against him by the head of the local mosque. ICC stated that ‘In Muslim societies, the father determines what religion the children will be, and so the marriage of a Christian man to a Muslim woman is a severe affront to Islam. On the other hand, Muslims have no problem if a Muslim man marries a Christian woman. This lack of reciprocity is designed to guard Islam from other religions...’ **[43a]**

See also subsection [Christians](#)

- 19.75 With regards to intermarriage between a non-Ahmadi Muslim and an Ahmadi, the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada observed in a response from its Research Directorate, dated 19 November 2009, that:

‘In a 28 October 2009 telephone interview with the Research Directorate, the Eastern Canada Regional Amir of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at Canada stated that marriages between non-Ahmadi Muslims and Ahmadis are rare... According to the General Secretary of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Lahore, since Ahmadis have been declared non-

Muslims in Pakistan, intermarriage between a non-Ahmadi Muslim and an Ahmadi “would not be recognized as legal marriage”... The General Secretary also noted that Pakistani society does not consider such marriages valid (Ahmadiyya Anjuman Lahore ... In contrast, the National General Secretary and the Eastern Canada Regional Amir of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at Canada both stated that intermarriage between a non-Ahmadi Muslim and an Ahmadi is legal in Pakistan (Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at Canada ... However, the Eastern Canada Regional Amir stated that while such a marriage is legal in Pakistani courts, religious leaders are “not concerned with the courts”... Similarly, the National General Secretary stated that such marriages are “condemned by religious clerics and ... [that] a biased judge can declare the marriage null and void...”. The General Secretary of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Lahore noted that Ahmadis have their own system to register their marriages and that couples may legally register their marriage with the Ahmadiyya authorities...’ **[12m]**

19.76 The same source added:

‘With respect to the consequences of intermarriage, the Eastern Canada Regional Amir stated that families may try to influence the couple not to marry and may contact a religious leader to exert additional pressure... The National General Secretary noted that religious clerics may pressure families to disown children who marry outside of their faith... According to the General Secretary of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Lahore, if the authorities become aware of an intermarriage, the couple may face prosecution and the marriage may be “declared invalid which may result [in] three years' imprisonment”... The National General Secretary stated that section 298C of the blasphemy laws can be applied to the marriage because Islamic terminology is used in the marriage ceremony... Section 298C of the Pakistan Penal Code states the following:

‘Any person of the Qadiani group or the Lahori group (who call themselves “Ahmadis”...), who directly or indirectly, poses himself as a Muslim, or calls, or refers to, his faith as Islam, or preaches or propagates his faith, or invites others to accept his faith, by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representations, or in any manner whatsoever outrages the religious feelings of Muslims shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine. (Pakistan 1860)

‘According to the General Secretary and the National General Secretary, couples who intermarry may face rejection by their families and society... The National General Secretary also stated that intermarriage may result in death threats and murder... The General Secretary stated that the severity of the consequences depend on the social class of the individuals concerned... The National General Secretary further noted that religious clerics support the ill-treatment of Ahmadis... The Eastern Canada Regional Amir stated that many intermarried couples face challenges when determining what faith their children will adopt... Information on the consequences faced by officiants of intermarriage between non-Ahmadi Muslims and Ahmadis could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.’ **[12m]**

See also subsection [Ahmadis](#)

19.77 With reference to inter-religious marriages between Shia and Sunni Muslims, the IRB noted in a response dated 25 May 2005, that:

‘A professor at the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University who specializes in modern Islamic developments in India and Pakistan, including women's issues, stated

in a 7 October 2003 telephone interview [to the IRB] that intermarriages between Sunnis and Shias are less problematic in Pakistan than marriages between Muslims and Christians. Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims share the same faith and abide by the same five pillars of Islam... There are no rules forcing a woman to adopt her husband's particular branch of Islam...

'In practice, the marriage agreement between both spouses will determine whether the woman joins her husband's religious community and whether the children will grow up in that community... In general, the children born into Sunni-Shia intermarriages are normally raised within the father's sect; however, there are cases where the children are brought up in the mother's sect...' **[12w]**

19.78 The IRB continued:

'In 20 October 2003 correspondence, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Toronto-based Al-Eman Society of Canada (AESC), a registered charitable religious organization, who is also an authorized imam in the Shia faith, stated that, according to Islam, a newly wed Sunni woman does not have to convert to the Shia faith of her husband, and that is true for Pakistan. It is up to the wife to make the decision... The Chairman also stated that "if there is pressure applied for the woman to convert, this is a different matter and has nothing to do with jurisprudence of either the Shi'a or Sunni [tradition]"...

'With respect to the religious upbringing of the children, the Chairman stated that it is a matter to be resolved by the mutual understanding of the parents...' **[12w]**

19.79 The IRB added that 'In 24 May 2005 correspondence to the Research Directorate, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) stated that "[t]here is no legal discrimination against inter-religious couples or their children. As far as the social situation is concerned, it depends on the beliefs of their extended family or the circle they move in. The society in general does not discriminate against them".' **[12w]**

19.80 A Daily Times article, dated 8 May 2007, reported on a divorce petition, apparently due to the parental opposition to a Sunni-Shia inter-religious marriage, stating:

'The claimant's attorney, advocate Raheel, said that the plaintiff's parents had filed for khula [divorce] on her behalf three months ago. "The couple got married in court seven months ago. The claimant and the defendant are 22 and 25 years old, respectively," advocate Raheel said. The two had decided to get married without parental consent. They were having problems convincing their parents due to sectarian difference: the girl belongs to a Shia family, while the boy's family is Sunni...

'[The defendant] said that he does not want to divorce the girl, but her family was persistent. The defendant also said that he had reason to believe that the girl was not showing up for the [divorce] hearings because she had been sent away or had been grounded. The couple had had no contact in the past five months – ever since they told their parents about the marriage.' **[55a]**

See also subsection [Shi'a and Sunni Muslims](#), and the section: [Women](#)

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Forced religious conversions

- 19.81 On 6 August 2012 the UN General Assembly reproduced Pakistan's 'National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21', for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated:
- 'Pakistan law strictly forbids forced conversions. Islam also forbids this practice. The Supreme Court has actively pursued cases related to forced conversion and discouraged it. In such cases, the courts have ensured that concerned individuals have an opportunity to express their wishes to convert (or complain about any threat/pressure they may be facing) in complete privacy and safety. The Supreme Court has also given them a period of reflection away from all sources that may influence their decision. The Commission on Minorities is also seized of the matter and is in the process of preparing recommendations for discouraging this practice.' **[83b] (paragraph 78)**
- 19.82 The Asian Human Rights Commission stated in its report, *The State of Human Rights in Pakistan in 2012* (AHRC Report 2012), published 10 December 2012, that it estimated:
- '... on average some 700 Christian and 300 Hindu girls are forcibly converted to Islam each year in Pakistan, notably in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtun Kha and Sindh provinces. Typically, girls are abducted, raped, and kept in Madrassas, where they are forced to sign marriage certificates and state that they have converted to Islam. Despite the 2011 Prevention of Anti-women Practices Act, which abolishes the practice of forced marriages and the exchange of girls in settling disputes, as well as the marriage of minor girls, the police refuse to intervene in such cases and courts are even complicit in this, by nullifying women's previous non-Islamic marriages and recognizing their forced marriages instead.' **[52n] (p8)**
- 19.83 A Jinnah Institute Research Report, *A Question of Faith: A Report on the Status of Religious Minorities in Pakistan*, published 7 June 2011, stated 'Incidents of forced conversions of Hindu women to Islam are reported on a regular basis in Sindh and can be correlated to gender based violence. In April 2009, it was reported that 18 Hindu women were forced to convert to Islam, and a more recent report in February 2010 hold the number at 25.' **[110a] (p55)**
- 19.84 The same source stated that a lawyer, of a Hindu family whose daughter was forced to convert to Islam following her abduction by a wealthy Muslim landowner, explained:
- '... often Hindu women belonging to lower castes are the most vulnerable and considered "sexually available" by men of Muslim-dominated communities. In Friday sermons at mosques in many areas of Sindh, jihad is often declared against Hindus. Muslims are exhorted to convert Hindu women to Islam by marrying them. When forced conversion cases make it to court, lawyers themselves avoid taking them up, fearing a backlash from maulvis [Islamic scholars].' **[110a] (p55)**
- 19.85 Reporting on the abduction and forced conversion and marriage of Hindu girls, IRIN cited on 27 February 2012 that:
- 'The abduction and kidnapping of Hindu girls is becoming more and more common,' Amarnath Motumal, a lawyer and leader of Karachi's Hindu community, told IRIN. 'This trend has been growing over the past four or five years, and it is getting worse day by day.' He said there were at least 15-20 forced abductions and conversions of young

girls from Karachi each month, mainly from the multi-ethnic Lyari area. The fact that more and more people were moving to Karachi from the interior of Sindh Province added to the dangers, as there were now more Hindus in Karachi, he said.’ **[41e]**

19.86 The HRCP Report 2010 cited:

‘Forced conversions have been one of the biggest concerns for minority and vulnerable communities in Pakistan for many years. In October 2010, the Senate Standing Committee on Minorities’ Affairs expressed concern over abduction and forcible conversion of Hindu girls in Sindh and demanded concrete measures to stop the conversions. Members of HRCP Working Group on Communities Vulnerable Because of Their Beliefs also highlighted instances of forced conversions of young girls in Karachi and elsewhere in Sindh. They said that conversions were not a Sindh-specific issue and were not confined to any particular gender, faith or locality. At times conversion of a girl from a minority faith began with her abduction and/or rape.’ **[27e] (p137)**

19.87 International Christian Concern (ICC) reported on 14 April 2011:

‘In Pakistan forced conversions to Islam, rapes and forced marriages are on the rise. The victims are mostly Hindu and Christian girls, belonging to religious minorities... This has been a worrying phenomenon for the Church in Pakistan for some time and that the Church is trying to address, looking for the cooperation of institutions but it is an uphill battle. “The Christian girls are the weakest and most vulnerable, because their communities are poor, defenceless and marginalized, therefore easily exposed to harassment and threats. Often they do not even have the courage to denounce the violence...”’ **[43b]**

19.88 The USSD IRF Report 2012 noted that forced and coerced conversions of religious minorities to Islam occurred at the hands of societal actors and that, according to religious minorities, government actions addressing such practices were inadequate. NGOs reported that ‘... as many as 20 to 25 women and girls from the Hindu community were abducted every month and forced to convert to Islam.’ The USSD also cited a case of alleged abduction and forced conversion of a Christian woman. **[3k] (Section II: Government inaction)**

See also Children: [Violence against children](#)

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FATWA

19.89 A Canadian Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) Response to Information Request (RIR) dated 20 November 2007 provided a definition of a fatwa (plural fatawa) as ‘...an “advisory opinion” issued by a mufti in response to a questioner...A mufti is an authority on Islamic law and tradition, who functions independently from the judicial system...Other sources indicate that a mullah [i.e., a religious cleric or a person with religious education]...may also be able to issue fatawa...’. The same source, citing a

professor of Islamic Studies at Emory University, Georgia, stated that “A fatwa...is a non-binding interpretation or ruling by a mufti. It is an opinion. A fatwa does not have an executive branch to carry out the ruling”.’ **[12k]**

19.90 The IRB response added that:

‘Fatawa address legal and religious issues...as well as matters of everyday life...They can reportedly range in length from single word responses, such as “yes” or “no,” to “book-length treatises”...According to the Professor of Islamic Studies, fatawa, or rulings on a question, can differ by Muslim schools of law... There are three Shia schools of law and four Sunni schools of law... Although all these schools of law argue from the Quran, each has its own fatwa tradition and historical precedents that can make their rulings different from one other. The Professor of Islamic Studies further stated that the issuance of fatawa is “very dynamic” and that rulings on the same question may differ by individual fatwa requester (i.e., because of different circumstances, etc.)...There are reportedly “hundreds” or even “thousands” of fatawa issued on a daily basis in Muslim countries...’ **[12k]**

19.91 With regard to the impact of fatwa the IRB report observed:

‘The influence of a fatwa reportedly depends on the stature of the person who issues it...It is also said to depend on the popularity and/or the practicality of the fatwa... According to the Professor of Islamic Studies, a person who asks for a fatwa can follow the interpretation or ruling, but is not obligated to do so; he or she may go to another mufti for a different ruling. The University of Toronto Professor of Law similarly indicated that a fatwa is an opinion with no legal standing and that it is up to an individual to decide whether he or she wants to ignore it or take it seriously...According to the Professor of Islamic Studies at Emory University, when a fatwa runs against the interests of government, then it can be declared invalid by the state (e.g., if a fatwa is issued by an “extremist” group). He noted that certain fatawa are resisted by the government because they are found to be “unhelpful for political leaders”... However, the Professor stated... “[g]enerally, a fatwa represents the interest of a specific group (e.g., a moderate or “extremist” group). Even though a fatwa may not be recognized by the government, the group that issued it takes it seriously. In such a case, a fatwa issued against an individual can be just as dangerous as if it were government action against the individual”.’ **[12k]**

19.92 In another RIR dated 11 January 2008, the IRB recorded the following information provided to them by the Chairman of the Government of Pakistan's Council of Islamic Ideology:

‘[I]n Pakistan, [the] issuance of fatwa is not organized by the state. It is privately managed by different institutions. As far as religious official institutions are concerned, there are ministries of Religious Affairs in the centre and also in provinces but they are not fatwa organizations. The Council of Islamic Ideology is a constitutional body which advises the government on Islamic legislation but it also does not issue fatwa. There is no official organization for [the] issuance of fatwa in Pakistan nor is there any official format of fatwa. The government does not publicize any fatwa because there is no official fatwa institution or an official Mufti.’ **[12d]**

19.93 The same RIR continued:

'Fatwas are issued privately by various scholars in whom the people have trust. The common practice is that a number of religious teaching institutions (Madrasas) have organizations of fatwa under their supervision. There are also individual scholars who issue these fatwas. However, there is no process of official recognition of any mufti or fatwa. The people consult these institutions and individuals on the basis of their knowledge and reputation.

'It is difficult to define the reach of a fatwa because the acceptability of [a] fatwa does not depend on official recognition or organization. The reach of [a] fatwa depends on personal recognition. It also depends on [the] religious group to which the inquirer of the fatwa belongs.

'The Government of Pakistan [has] no control over the issuance of fatwa[s]. There [is] no legislation for organizing or controlling the fatwa. According to the theory of fatwa, a fatwa is not binding. It is not synonymous with legal judgment. A person may ask fatwa on the same question from several scholars. A mufti is allowed to revoke his fatwa under several circumstances, including new information, on realizing his mistake in the interpretation of the sources or finding new evidences. The corrected fatwa is issued with a note explaining the circumstances.' **[12d]**

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Voting rights

19.94 The USSD International Religious Freedom Report 2004, published on 15 September 2004, noted that:

'In January 2002, the Government eliminated the country's system of separate religious-based electorates, which had been a longstanding point of contention between religious minorities and human rights groups on one side and the Government on the other. With the elimination of the separate electorate system, political representation is to be based on geographic constituencies that represent all residents, regardless of religious affiliation. Minority group leaders believe this change may help to make public officials take notice of the concerns and rights of minority groups. Because of their often geographically concentrated populations, religious minorities could have significant influence as swing voting blocks in some constituencies. Few non-Muslims are active in the country's mainstream political parties due to limitations on their ability to run for elective office under the previous separate electorate system.' **[3h] (Section II)**

19.95 The report continued:

'While most minority leaders welcomed the return of joint electorates, some complained that the elimination of reserved seats made the election of any minority members unlikely. In response to this complaint, the Government announced in August 2002 that reserved parliamentary seats for religious minorities would be restored. Non-Muslims are now able to vote both for a local candidate in their geographic constituencies and for a representative of their religious group.' **[3h] (Section II)**

19.96 The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) reported in a response, dated 11 January 2013, on the situation of Ahmadis in Pakistan, that:

'Sources report that, for electoral purposes, Ahmadis are registered in a separate voters' list... The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) notes that electoral lists are divided by religious groups in Pakistan... To register as voters, Ahmadis have to sign a certificate "deny[ing] the veracity" of the founder of the Ahmadiyya community... They are also asked to register themselves as "non-Muslims"... As a consequence, most Ahmadis boycotted the 2008 elections... The AHRC further indicates that "[t]hese devious and unacceptable procedures have usurped the fundamental civic rights of Ahmadis and for decades now they cannot stand as candidates for any assembly, national, provincial or even district"... The AHRC provides the example that even in Rabwah, Punjab Province, whose population is 95 percent Ahmadi, they do not have representation on the town council... The Express Tribune similarly notes that Ahmadis do not vote and do not run for elections...' [12v]

19.97 The Asian Human Rights Commission reported on 8 May 2012 that 'Pakistan has now introduced a form for the registration of all voters but every applicant who ticks himself as a Muslim is made to sign a certificate printed on the back of the form declaring that he or she is not associated with the "Qadian" or "Lahori" group, or calls himself an Ahmadi. This form includes a warning that a violation will be punished with imprisonment.' [52k]

19.98 Regarding the 2008 general elections in Pakistan, the HRCP Report 2008 noted that:

'The ECP [Election Commission of Pakistan] compiled a separate electoral roll just for Ahmadis, distinguishing them from the list of all other eligible voters in the country. In addition to outright religious discrimination, a separate list for Ahmadis completely disregarded the spirit of the joint electorate, the Constitution of Pakistan, and the guarantee of international human rights. As had happened in previous elections, the Ahmadis chose not to participate in the elections.' [27a] (p105, Political participation)

See also subsection [Ahmadis](#)

19.99 The Legal Framework Order (LFO) 2002 altered article 51 of the Constitution so that ten seats in the National Assembly were reserved for non-Muslims (including Christians, Sikhs, Hindus, Parsis and Ahmadis). The LFO also amended article 106 of the constitution so that the Provincial Assemblies would have seats reserved for non-Muslims: three seats in both Balochistan and NWFP [North West Frontier Province], eight in Punjab and nine in Sindh (though Ahmadis were not entitled to reserved representation in Baluchistan). (National Reconstruction Bureau; Legal Framework Order 2002, 21 August 2002) [29j]

19.100 Of the twenty three seats allocated to minorities in total in the Provincial Assemblies, nine were set aside for Christians, seven for Hindus, four for Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsis [together], and three for Ahmadis. (Revival of The Constitution of 1973 Order, 1985, date accessed 20 May 2013) [29p]

19.101 The USSD IRF Report 2012 observed, in regard to Ahmadis, that:

'The government designates religious affiliation on passports and requests religious information in national identity card applications. A citizen must have a national identity card to vote. Those wishing to be listed as Muslims must swear their belief that the Prophet Muhammad is the final prophet, and denounce the Ahmadiyya Muslim movement's founder as a false prophet and his followers as non-Muslim. This provision prevents Ahmadi Muslims from obtaining legal documents and puts pressure on

members of the community to deny their beliefs in order to enjoy citizenship rights, including the right to vote. Many Ahmadis are thus effectively excluded from taking part in elections.’ [3p] (Section II: Legal/Policy Framework)

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Ahmadis

Background

19.102 [Al Islam](#), the official website of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, accessed 10 August 2011, noted in its undated overview of Ahmadis, that:

‘The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is a dynamic, fast growing international revival movement within Islam. Founded in 1889, it spans over 195 countries with membership exceeding tens of millions. Its current headquarters are in the United Kingdom.

‘Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is the only Islamic organization to believe that the long-awaited Messiah has come in the person of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad(as) (1835-1908) of Qadian. Ahmad(as) claimed to be the metaphorical second coming of Jesus(as) of Nazareth and the divine guide, whose advent was foretold by the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad(sa). Ahmadiyya Muslim Community believes that God sent Ahmad(as), like Jesus(as), to end religious wars, condemn bloodshed and reinstitute morality, justice and peace. Ahmad’s(as) advent has brought about an unprecedented era of Islamic revival. He divested Islam of fanatical beliefs and practices by vigorously championing Islam’s true and essential teachings...

‘His rigorous and rational defenses of Islam unsettled conventional Muslim thinking. As part of its effort to revive Islam, Ahmadiyya Muslim Community continues to spread Ahmad’s(as) teachings of moderation and restraint in the face of bitter opposition from parts of the Muslim world...

‘Five spiritual leaders have succeeded Ahmad(as) since his demise in 1908. It’s fifth and current spiritual head, Mirza Masroor Ahmad, resides in the United Kingdom.’ [17a]

19.103 The website for [The Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam](#), accessed 10 August 2011, noted that ‘...there are two sections of the Ahmadiyya Movement... Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat-i-Islam Lahore, the head quarters of which is in Lahore, Pakistan. The other section is the Qadiani Jamaat, the headquarters of which is in Rabwah, Pakistan.’ The website, undated, described the main differences between the the Qadiani Jamaat and the Lahore Ahmadiyya Jamaat:

‘The Qadiani Jamaat believes that all Muslims who have not entered in the Bai’at (pledge) of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement are kafirs and out of the pail of Islam, even though these Muslims never heard the name of the Founder or even though they may be believing in the Founder’s truthfulness. The crux of the matter according to the Qadiani Jamaat is the formal entry in the Bai’at of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement on the terms of belief entertained and preached by them.

‘As against the above Qadiani belief, the Lahore Ahmadiyya Jamaat believes that every person who recites “Kalimah-e-Tayyebah” [“There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah” (La ilaha ill-Allah, Muhammad-ur rasul-ullah) – The

Pronouncement of the Faith of Islam] is a Muslim, no matter to what sect he belongs to and no matter whether he believes in the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement or not. According to them non-belief in a Mujaddid or Promised Messiah is simply a sin like many other sins for which a person is accountable to Allah, but one is not thrown out of the pail of Islam, nor does one become a kafir by committing a sin.

‘The issue of Takfir-e-Muslimeen was the first difference of belief which arose amongst the members of the Ahmadiyya Movement after the passing away of the Founder of the Movement, and ultimately it led to the Split of the Movement into two sections.’ **[18a]**

Demography

- 19.104 Official figures obtained from the Government of Pakistan’s Population Census Organisation in its last Pakistan census, conducted in 1998, recorded that Ahmadis represented 0.22% **[29r] (Population by religion)** of the total Pakistan population (at that time) of 132,325,279 **[29l] (Area, Population, Density and Urban/Rural Proportion)** – approximately 291,000 people. The USSD IRF Report 2010 noted that the number of Ahmadis in Pakistan ‘...according to Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya, is nearly 600,000, although it is difficult to establish an accurate estimate because Ahmadis, who are legally prohibited from identifying themselves as Muslims, generally choose not to identify themselves as non-Muslims.’ **[3l] (Section I)** The USCIRF Report 2013 stated that there may be three to four million Ahmadis in Pakistan. **[53d] (p119)**
- 19.105 The website Persecution of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, reporting on the religious persecution of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community, stated in its annual report, Persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan during the Year 2010 (Annual Report 2010), dated 31 December 2010, that the Ahmadi headquarters was based in Rabwah and more than 95 per cent of its population was Ahmadi. **[60a] (p4)** Based on official government figures Rabwah has a population of about 70,000 Ahmadis. (PHRG Report 2007) **[51a] (p2, Section 1, Introduction)**
- 19.106 The Persecution of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Annual Report 2010 also noted that Rabwah was now officially named Chenab Nagar despite residents’ objections. **[60a] (p65)**

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Legislation discriminating against Ahmadis

- 19.107 The USCIRF Report 2013 observed that Ahmadis in Pakistan were:

‘...subjected to the most severe legal restrictions and officially-sanctioned discrimination. As described above, egregious acts of violence have been perpetrated against Ahmadis and anti-Ahmadi laws have helped create a permissive climate for vigilante violence against members of this community. Ahmadis are prevented by law from engaging in the full practice of their faith and may face criminal charges for a range of religious practices, including the use of religious terminology. In 1974, the government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto amended Pakistan’s constitution to declare members of the Ahmadi religious community to be “non-Muslims,” despite their insistence to the contrary.’ **[53d] (p126)**

- 19.108 The USSD IRF Report 2012 noted that:

'A 1974 constitutional amendment declared that Ahmadis are non-Muslims. Sections 298(b) and 298(c) of the penal code, commonly referred to as the "anti-Ahmadi laws," prohibit Ahmadi Muslims from calling themselves Muslims, referring to their religious beliefs as Islam, preaching or propagating their religious beliefs, inviting others to accept Ahmadiyya teachings, or insulting the religious feelings of Muslims. The punishment for violation of these provisions is imprisonment for up to three years and a fine. Most politicians oppose any amendments to the constitution affecting its Islamic clauses, especially the ones relating to Ahmadi Muslims.' **[3k] (Section II: Legal/Policy Framework)**

19.109 The same source stated that:

'Ahmadi Muslim leaders expressed continued concern over the government's use of the penal code to harass and intimidate Ahmadis on the basis of their faith. They alleged that the government used the "anti-Ahmadi laws" to target and harass Ahmadis, frequently accusing converts to the Ahmadiyya Muslim community of blasphemy, violations of "anti-Ahmadi laws," or other crimes. The vague wording of the provision that forbids Ahmadis from directly or indirectly identifying themselves as Muslims enabled officials to bring charges against Ahmadi Muslims for using the standard Muslim greeting and for naming their children Muhammad. According to Ahmadiyya leaders, between January and December [2012], authorities charged 56 Ahmadis in 20 different cases. Most of these cases were filed in connection with "anti-Ahmadi laws." At year's end, no Ahmadis were in prison; however, during the year 26 Ahmadis were arrested for their faith and spent time in prison before being released on bail.' **[3k] (Section II: Government practices)**

See also sub-sections above on [Blasphemy Laws](#) and [Voting rights](#)

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Passports and ID cards

19.110 The USSD IRF Report 2012 observed that 'The government designates religious affiliation on passports and requests religious information in national identity card applications. A citizen must have a national identity card to vote.' **[3k] (Section II: Legal/Policy Framework)** However, '... obtaining a Pakistani national identity card or passport requires the applicant to sign a religious affirmation denouncing the founder of the Ahmadi faith as a false prophet. Because Ahmadis are required to register to vote as non-Muslims and national identity cards identify Ahmadis as non-Muslims, those who refuse to disavow their claim to being Muslims are effectively disenfranchised from participating in elections at any level.' (USCIRF Report 2013) **[53d] (p127)** Furthermore, 'Due to the passport requirements to list religious affiliation and denounce the Ahmadiyya Muslim prophet, Ahmadi Muslims were restricted from going on the Hajj because they were prohibited from declaring themselves Muslims.' (USSD IRF Report 2012) **[3k] (Section II: Government practices)**

19.111 A report by BBC News correspondent in Pakistan, Mohammed Hanif, dated 16 June 2010, stated 'When a Pakistani Muslim applies for a passport or national ID card, they are asked to sign an oath that no Muslim anywhere in the world is asked to sign. The oath goes like this: "I consider Mirza Ghulam Ahmad an impostor prophet. And also consider his followers, whether belonging to the Lahori or Qadiani group, to be non-Muslims".' **[35h]**

19.112 The Journal of Humanitarian Affairs published an article dated 23 September 2011, which stated:

'If you go to a passport office in Pakistan to apply for a new passport, or renew an older one, you soon find yourself face to face with an instant formula for religious intolerance. Your religious faith or affiliation is to be printed on your passport and the procedure requires you to sign a declaration that literally abuses a former Muslim sect that has long been cast out as infidels. What's the worst is that you have to sign it or else you don't get your passport without having to declare yourself a non-Muslim (which means potential victimization, possibly life-threatening).' **[46a]**

19.113 The USCIRF Report 2013 noted that 'In recent years, individuals have refused to sign the religious affirmation clause for a passport and still received the document.' **[53d] (p127)**

19.114 In a letter to the UK Border Agency, dated 20 January 2011, with regards to recording a persons religious faith in a Pakistani passport, the British High Commission (BHC) in Islamabad consulted with an official working within the 'passport circle' in the Government of Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency. He responded as follows 'There is no stamp of "Ahmadiyya". Its [sic – the person's religion] printed on second page of the passport...it's [a] one time process and it can be printed only... once when [the] passport is printed.' **[11p]**

19.115 The BHC also consulted with a locally employed member of staff within the British High Commission, whose opinion was as follows:

'The old PAK ppt [Pakistani passport] had [a] religion column on the biodata page. The new PAK machine readable ppts were introduced in Oct 2004 when religion was not being mentioned. In 2006 the authorities started putting religion on [the] annotation page. The passport database is interconnected with the NADRA's [National Database and Registration Authority] system, where the things are being tallied. During the database recording for a new PAK ppt, religion question is asked. If there is any discrepancy the applicants are asked to submit [an] affidavit on this to remove doubts.' **[11p]**

19.116 The same letter added, in response to the following questions posed by the UK Border Agency:

'UKBA: What is the process to record your faith in a Pakistani passport?

'BHC: At the time of data recording for a new passport questions are asked verbally including religion.

'UKBA: Is a stamp issued to confirm the individuals Ahmadiyya faith?

'BHC: There has never been any stamp impression (Rubber Stamp) for religion/faith on the manual (old) PAK ppt. However the faith/religion is printed on the annotation page of the new PAK ppt. The term Ahmadiyya is printed on page two of the passport. We are not aware of there being a wet ink stamp.

'UKBA: Who applies the stamp in the Pakistani passport?

'BHC: The passport and Immigration authorities are responsible for printing the biodata and additional info of the applicant (faith/religion) on the passports both on manual and machine readable.

'UKBA: Can the stamp be applied at any stage?

'BHC: Yes, but in such cases applicants needs [sic] to reapply for modifications and [a] new passport will be issued.

'UKBA: Could a bribe be paid for an Ahmadiyya stamp to be issued?

'BHC: The system can be abused... [in] different ways. It is possible that a bribe could be paid at the time the passport is issued, but we do not have any direct evidence of this.

'UKBA: Do those with the Ahmadiyya faith declared in their passport have problems with immigration when departing from Pakistan?

'BHC: There isn't any problem in departing from Pakistan for Ahmadis holding Pakistani ppt. As long as the visa and passport is genuine.' **[11p]**

- 19.117 The HRCP Report 2009 noted that 'According to the Federal Minister for Religious Affairs, International Machine Readable (IMR) passports were made mandatory for obtaining Hajj visas in 2009. Applications without Computerized National Identity Cards (CNIC) and IMR passports were not entertained causing great inconvenience to the pilgrims.' **[27c] (p120)**

See also subsection on [Voting rights](#) above, and sections: [Citizenship and Nationality](#); [National identity cards](#); [Exit/entry procedures](#); [Passports](#), and [Forged and fraudulently obtained official documents](#)

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Khatme Nabuwaat

- 19.118 The USSD IRF Report 2009, described the Khatme Nabuwwat (Committee to Secure the Finality of Prophethood) as '... an anti-Ahmadiyya religious clerical group.' **[3c] (Section II)**

- 19.119 The PHRG Report 2007 reported on a meeting with the Khatme Nabuwaat in Rabwah. The report observed:

'...members of the Islamabad Chapter of Khatme Nabuwwat informed the mission that it is Khatme Nabuwwat's belief that no Prophet can come after Mohammed as he is the final Prophet. Anyone who claims otherwise is an infidel and their claim is false, baseless and a crime. Khatme Nabuwwat's mission is therefore to spread understanding of the finality of the Prophet through preaching and books. The source insisted that they have mutual respect for all, including Ahmadis, as humans. However, Ahmadis should not assert themselves to be Muslim because they do not believe in the laws of the Prophet....the purpose of Khatme Nabuwwat is to act against those who do not accept the finality of the prophet, to contradict them and to invite them to rejoin the faith.... this role means that the focus of Khatme Nabuwwat is on Ahmadis in particular. According to Khatme Nabuwwat (Islamabad Chapter) the movement against Ahmadis

started when members of the Muslim community were attacked by Ahmadis at Rabwah railway station in 1974: the source told the mission that “Ahmadis were terrorists, and they are terrorists today”.’ **[51a] (p8)**

- 19.120 The same source also noted that representatives of the Ahmadi community in Rabwah stated that members or supporters of the Khatme Nabuwaat were the principal attackers of Ahmadis and their property in Rabwah. **[51a] (p8 Section 2, The role of Khatme Nabuwat (Committee to Secure the Finality of the Prophethood))**
- 19.121 The website Persecution of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community reported in its Annual Report 2012 that, despite Khatme Nabuwat and other anti-Ahmadi groups holding gatherings in Rabwah **(p98-99)**, ‘All rallies and conferences of Ahmadis in Rabwah... large or small have been under a ban since April 1984 after the promulgation of anti-Ahmadiyya ordinance. Even sports events organized by the Community have been prohibited by the authorities.’ **[60b] (p197)**
- 19.122 On its website, accessed 27 June 2013, [Khatm-e-Nubuwwat](#) expressed its opinion on the Ahmadiyya, which stated:
- ‘Qadiyaniat (so called Ahmediyyat) is a non-genuine maneuvered ideology, invented by anti-Islam imperialist forces, aiming at shaking the very foundations of Islam. Qadiyanis are nothing but a gang of traitors, apostates and infidels, and yet many still accompany them out of confusion and lack of knowledge. The purpose of this site is to disclose the anti-Islamic character of these heretics and provide relevant information to those who need it. Needless to say that it is the primary religious duty of every Muslim to struggle against this evil.’ **[109a]**
- 19.123 The same source branded the Ahmadi faith as a ‘cult’ and stated:
- ‘Qadianism (‘Ahmadism’) is pseudo religion whose leadership exploits its members socially, psychologically and financially. The leaders of this cult have been able to maintain their hegemony over their ordinary members through treachery, plagiarism, cruel and inhuman discipline. This cult aims to steal the identity of Islam by misinterpreting the original sources of Islam. The purpose of this site is to expose the tactics and logical fallacies of this cult.’ **[109a]**
- 19.124 The South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) reported in its South Asia Intelligence Review Weekly Assessment and Briefings, dated 27 June 2011, that ‘On June 10, 2011, the All Pakistan Students Khatm-e-Nubuwwat (End of Prophethood) Federation issued pamphlets branding members of the Ahmadiyya community as “wajib-ul-qatl” (obligatory to be killed). The pamphlet, circulated in Faisalabad District of Punjab Province, read, “To shoot such people is an act of jihad and to kill such people is an act of sawab (blessing)”.’ **[61f] (Volume 9, No. 51, June 27, 2011)**

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Violence and discrimination against Ahmadis

- 19.125 The Asian Human Rights Commission, commenting on the speech made by Pakistan’s foreign minister, Ms. Rabbani Khar, at the UN Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on Pakistan, stated on 4 November 2012 that:

'The Ahmadis are one of the largest minority groups in the country and the members of this community are outstanding citizens that contribute to the welfare and wellbeing of the community. However, they are frequently attacked for their beliefs. Their places of worship are attacked and they are not allowed to carry out their religious observances. They are a disenfranchised people. They are even not allowed to bury their dead in public graveyards.' **[52m]**

19.126 The HRCP Report 2012 cited:

'The hate campaign and violence against Ahmadi citizens continued without any obvious challenge across the country in 2012. As many as 20 Ahmadis were killed on account of their religious identity or belief in the year under review. The incidence of murderous attacks was the greatest in Karachi where 10 Ahmadis were assassinated in 2012, four of them in the space of 10 days in September and another three in October. A fourth Ahmadi man injured in an attack in the city in October died in November. Two Ahmadis were killed in Nawabshah, Sindh, and another two in Quetta, Balochistan. The other six Ahmadis were killed in Layyah, Sargodha, Chiniot and Sialkot districts of Punjab, Bannu district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Harnai district of Balochistan.' **[27b] (p103)**

19.127 The Parliamentary Human Rights Group Report of the PHRG Fact Finding Mission to Pakistan to Examine the Human Rights Situation of the Ahmadiyya Community, published 24 September 2010 (PHRG Report 2010), stated that 'The Mission were told about several cases of the murder of Ahmadis, reportedly for their religious beliefs. In many of these cases it appears that the police are slow to carry out a proper investigation and that even following a religiously motivated murder, the family of the deceased is not being given any protection.' **[51b] (p24)**

19.128 The USCIRF Report 2013 stated:

'In recent years, scores of Ahmadis have been murdered in attacks which appear to be religiously motivated. During the reporting period [31 January 2012 to 31 January 2013], USCIRF received reports of 44 different attacks targeting Ahmadis, with 22 incidents resulting in the death of 23 individuals. Attacks occurred across the country, including major cities such as Lahore, Quetta, and Karachi... The poor legal standing of Ahmadis under Pakistan's constitution and criminal code (discussed below) fosters a climate of impunity, where perpetrators feel empowered to attack them with little or no fear of arrest or prosecution.' **[53d] (p122)**

19.129 The website Persecution of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community noted in its Annual Report 2012, published 31 December 2012, that 20 Ahmadis were murdered for their faith in 2012, ten of whom were killed in Karachi. **(p27)** According to the source, between 1984 and 31 December 2012, 226 Ahmadis were murdered for their faith. **[60b] p197)**

19.130 On 7 May 2012, The Express Tribune, citing a report by Jamaat Ahmaddiya, 'Persecution of Ahmedis in Pakistan during the year 2011', published on 2 May, stated that, since 1984, 210 Ahmadis had been murdered for their faith, with 254 assassination attempts. **[92j]**

19.131 The AHRC reported on 12 March 2012 that 'For some years now, Ahmadi elites in Pakistan have been targeted. Several businessmen, engineers, doctors, academics and others have been either killed or kidnapped. Some have been ransomed at a very high cost and there are others, who have not been traced and the authorities have shown no

interest in their recovery. Ahmadi teachers have been discriminated against and even terminated because of their faith.’ [52j]

19.132 The website, Persecution of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, accessed 20 June 2013, provided [Monthly Reports](#) of incidents against the Ahmadi community in Pakistan, dating back from the year 2000. [60c]

19.133 The HRCP Report 2012 stated:

‘In a number of cases, the police in Punjab either removed the Kalima (Islamic creed) from Ahmadi worship places or demolished the minarets of the structures. This happened in Kharian in July, in Lahore’s localities of Garhi Shahu and Sultanpura in May, and in Mughalpura (Lahore) and Khushab in September. Ahmadi in Lahore and Sargodha also complained that in some places the police had barred them from offering animal sacrifices on Eidul Azha. Several incidents of religionbased harassment of Ahmadi students were reported from different places... A number of Ahmadi graveyards were attacked, including one incident in Lahore where around a dozen armed men vandalised 120 tombstones in the Ahmadi graveyard at Model Town in December. Police removed Quranic verses and religious texts from tombstones in an Ahmadi graveyard in Hafizabad in August. In the same district, unidentified men erased Islamic inscriptions from gravestones in another Ahmadi cemetery in October.’ [27b] (p103-104)

19.134 The PHRG Report 2010 also cited the attack on two Ahmadi mosques that occurred in May 2010, subsequent to the Mission’s visit of February 2010. The Report noted that:

‘The attack happened on Friday the 28th May 2010 when two large Ahmadi mosques were full of worshippers who had gathered for Friday-prayers. A well coordinated attack for which the responsibility was claimed by Tehrik-e-Taliban, a hitherto unknown group but assumed to be a front for a sectarian organisation. Those who survived claimed that they heard the attackers shouting slogans of “Khatm-e-Nabuwaat” and “kill all!”. Assailants entered the two mosques when the people were worshipping and in the end 85 people were killed and 150 injured.’ [51b] (p29)

19.135 The same source added that:

‘Representatives of the Ahmadiyya community told the Mission that the situation [of discrimination and violence] that currently exists cannot be attributed solely to extremist Mullahs who openly incite hatred and murder. It is also the state and political parties in power who are contributing to the discrimination against and persecution of Ahmadis.

‘The Mission met several state representatives, who without exception stated that state bodies were pressurised by religious extremists and that their own ability to reign in these parties was very limited. Representatives of the Islamabad Ahmadiyya community told the Mission that the reason for the failure of the government to take active steps against religious extremists was the fact that even the government was reliant on their support.

‘In Lahore the Mission was told that [sic] the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan that extremist Mullahs have developed a power base and now wield much influence because they are being encouraged by the government’s failure to act against them. While there is impunity there is no reason for these groups to stop. According to the Commission the government must make examples of extremist Mullahs. At the local

level, the police are often reluctant to touch the Mullahs – again this reflects the failure of the government to deal with the situation at any level.’ **[51b] (p37-38)**

19.136 In its Annual Report 2011, dated 31 December 2011, the Persecution of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community reported on the ongoing mulla-led ‘hate campaign’ against Ahmadis, using tools such as sermons, leaflets, newspapers and the internet. **(p13)** The report noted:

‘The anti-Ahmadi hate campaign is gaining further momentum and its effects are felt by Ahmadis all over Pakistan. This year, a greater number of Ahmadi communities were targeted in various cities, towns and villages compared to last year; even educational institutions have not been spared, and Ahmadi students have consequently suffered. The authorities have been repeatedly informed of the worsening situation, but little effective action is taken against the sources and leadership of this well coordinated and deadly campaign that continues to intensify.’ **[61b] (p23)**

19.137 The HRCP Report 2012 concurred and cited ‘Hate speech continued unchallenged with the Ahmadis being the most common target. Posters and stickers exhorting the faithful to at the very least boycott the Ahmadis socially were not an uncommon sight on the walls of main cities and in public and private intra-city buses.’ **[27b] (p100)**

19.138 On 7 May 2012, The Express Tribune noted that ‘During 2011 Ahmadis were not allowed to build any places of worship anywhere in Pakistan. At some places, the police forcibly stopped the construction... There were 1,008 cases pending against Ahmedis in courts throughout the country.’ **[92j]**

19.139 In its Annual Report 2012, the website Persecution of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community stated that 56 Ahmadis were booked by the police in 2012, 20 more than in 2011. **(p2)** The report also listed the number of criminal cases brought against Ahmadis from April 1984 to 31 December 2012. The list included 447 cases of Ahmadis booked for ‘posing as Muslims’, 747 booked for preaching and 299 charged under the ‘‘Blasphemy Law’, i.e. PPC 295-C.’ The summary cited a total of 3,913 cases of Ahmadis being booked or charged on religious grounds. In addition, the report also noted that the entire population of Rabwah (more than 60,000 people) was booked under 298-C of the Penal Code on 8 June 2008. **[60b] (p196)**

19.140 On 9 July 2008, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) reported that a First Information Report (FIR) was lodged on 8 June 2008 against thousands of Ahmadi residents of Rabwah. The FIR followed official celebrations of the Ahmadi community that were held across Pakistan, especially in Rabwah. The FIR stated that ‘... every person of every locality of the community was seen involved in these celebrations with fire works, lighting their places, and greeting each other (which is amounted to preaching of their faith, a crime according to a controversial law of the country).’ **[27d]**

19.141 The USSD Report 2009 noted with regards to the above case that ‘There were no developments regarding the June 2008 case in which police charged all the residents of Rabwah in Punjab under anti-Ahmadi laws and arrested Muhammad Yunus for lighting fireworks and lamps and greeting each other, which the government considered to be preaching their faith, a crime by law.’ **[3b] (Section 2c)**

19.142 The USSD IRF Report 2012 added that ‘At year’s end, no Ahmadis were in prison; however, during the year 26 Ahmadis were arrested for their faith and spent time in prison before being released on bail.’ **[3k] (Section II)**

- 19.143 The PHRG Report 2010 stated that ‘The Mission was told by a number of witnesses that the judicial process moved very slowly in the case of Ahmadis and that discretionary remedies, like the granting of bail, were frequently refused to Ahmadis.’ **[51b] (p37)**
- 19.144 The same source cited a testimony from a witness whose husband, Mohammed Iqbal, had been sentenced to 25 years imprisonment for blasphemy. ‘The Mission met and interviewed Mr Iqbal’s wife and son, who said that they had been the only Ahmadi family in their village and that the incident arose because the imam of the local mosque did not approve of Mr Iqbal coming to the mosque to talk to him.’ Mr Iqbal appealed against his sentence but, five years on, the appeal is still pending. In the meantime, Mrs Iqbal moved to Rabwah, where it was reported that she ‘feels safer’. **[51b] (p20)**
- 19.145 In a report to the UN Committee Against Racial Discrimination, Pakistan: The Land of Religious Apartheid and Jackboot Justice, published August 2007, the Asian Centre for Human Rights (ACHR) stated that ‘On 26 January 2007, police reportedly registered cases against five Ahmadi children... under Section 17 of the Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance in Chora Kalan police station in Khushab district for subscribing to Jamaat-e-Ahmadiya’s monthly children’s magazine Tasheezul Azhan.’ **[67a] (p5: Persecution under blasphemy laws)**
- 19.146 The USSD IRF Report 2012 also noted that Ahmadis faced restrictions on establishing places of worship and the authorities:
- ‘... consistently refused to grant permission to construct non-Muslim places of worship, especially for the Ahmadiyya and Bahai communities, citing the need to maintain public order. Minority religious groups accused the government of inaction in cases where extremist groups attacked their places of worship. Ahmadis reported that their mosques and community lands were routinely confiscated by local authorities and given to the mainstream Muslim community. Ahmadis also reported incidents in which authorities tried to block construction or renovation of their places of worship. Because the law prohibits Ahmadi Muslims from reciting or relating to the kalima (Islamic testimony of faith), authorities forcibly removed the kalima from Ahmadi places of worship in some instances. District governments often refused to grant Ahmadi Muslims permission to hold public events; they instead held meetings in members’ homes.’ **[3k] (Section II)**
- 19.147 All minorities claimed to have experienced discrimination in recruitment for government jobs, but the Ahmadis particularly suffered and ‘...contended that a “glass ceiling” prevented their promotion to senior positions, and certain government departments refused to hire or retain qualified Ahmadi Muslims.’ (USSD IRF Report 2012) **[3k] (Section II)**
- 19.148 The PHRG Report 2010 noted that ‘The Mission received a number of reports and testimony of witnesses to the effect that it was very difficult for Ahmadis to construct places of worship. In the most extreme case, the local administration actually demolished a half finished structure which was intended to be used as a place of worship.’ **[51b] (p31)**
- 19.149 In interviewing Ahmadi Community Representatives in Rabwah, members of the PHRG Report 2007 identified that first information reports [charge/allegation reported to the police] brought against Ahmadis were registered by three main sources, ‘those lodged by members of Khatme Nabuwat, those precipitated by police or government

intervention, and those used to settle personal rivalries or enmity.’ **[51a] (p12, Section 3, Potential Risk Factors Faced by Ahmadi in Rabwah)**

19.150 Members of the PHRG were informed by the Ahmadi Community Representatives that they could not look to the police or the Courts for protection in Rabwah and were unable to give an example, to the PHRG mission, of the police having provided protection to an Ahmadi in Rabwah. The report further noted that:

‘The mission were informed that the state provides no protection to senior Ahmadi figures or mosques at Rabwah, except for a symbolic presence at the central mosque at Friday prayers. The Representatives described how during the Khatme Nabuwwat conference in Rabwah the police line the streets and look on as Khatme Nabuwwat members march through the town, chanting “filthy, dirty slogans” and vandalising Ahmadi property... The Ahmadi Community Representatives concluded that if someone fled to Rabwah fearing attack in their home area there would be no police protection available to them. Indeed, the police are seen by the community as actively protecting the Mullahs and their followers.’ **[51a] (p21, Section 4.2, State protection)**

19.151 The PHRG members consulted other sources and similar views were expressed:

‘Faizur Rehman, President, Amnesty International Pakistan stated that nowhere, including Rabwah, is safe for Ahmadi as the police would refuse to give protection to an Ahmadi. When asked if the police might react differently in Rabwah to elsewhere in Pakistan, Mr Rehman explained that whilst it is not impossible, it has not happened. He explained that... even relatively senior and educated local police officers find that their hands are tied by their superiors when dealing with Ahmadi cases.’ **[51a] (p21, Section 4.2, State protection)**

19.152 On the subject of internal relocation and Rabwah, the PHRG spoke with Amnesty International President, Faiz ur Rehman, who noted:

‘...that it is only Rabwah where the Ahmadi are in the majority and as a result an Ahmadi may feel a little safe in Rabwah compared to a town or village where they are in a small minority. Those from outside Rabwah may therefore flee there if they are in fear in their home area. However, Mr Rehman pointed out that Khatme Nabuwwat have an office in Rabwah. Thus, whilst those who flee to Rabwah might gain safety for a period of time, fear of Khatme Nabuwwat is ever present... Broadly agreeing with Mr Rehman, the HRCP [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan] explained that whilst Rabwah is safer than most other places in Pakistan for Ahmadi’s, there are instances of violence here as well. When asked about whether Rabwah can offer a refuge for those targeted elsewhere in Pakistan, the HRCP explained that if an Ahmadi was pursued across Pakistan, they would be caught by their persecutor in Rabwah. Clarifying this point, the HRCP stated that safety in Rabwah depends on the nature of the persecution and/or the influence of the persecutor... The HRCP explained that the best way for an Ahmadi to protect her or himself is to hide their religion: living in Rabwah has the opposite effect as it is the focus of Khatme Nabuwwat and living in the town marks a person as an Ahmadi.’ **[51a] (p20, Section 4.1, Community protection)**

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Societal discrimination

- 19.153 The Human Rights Watch World Report 2013, Pakistan, dated 31 January 2013, stated that Ahmadis faced ‘...increasing social discrimination as militant groups used provisions of the law to prevent Ahmadis from “posing as Muslims,” forced the demolition of Ahmadi mosques in Lahore, barred Ahmadis from using their mosques in Rawalpindi, and vandalized Ahmadi graves across Punjab province. In most instances, Punjab provincial officials supported militants’ demands instead of protecting Ahmadis and their mosques and graveyards.’ **[7i] (Religious minorities and women)**
- 19.154 The HRCP Report 2012 noted ‘The Ahmadis complained that while the authorities banned their conferences, rallies and major sporting events in Rabwa, the centre of the Ahmadi community in Pakistan, anti-Ahmadi clerics were given a free hand to hold a number of provocative rallies in and around Rabwa.’ **[27b] (p104)**
- 19.155 The PHRG Report 2007, considering the social context of the Ahmadis, reported that:
- ‘The HRCP [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan] note that there is a class or economic element motivating this [poor] treatment of Ahmadis, pointing out that the Hindu community, who belong to a low economic class, receives relatively little popular attention and low levels of discrimination. The Ahmadis, however, tend to be an educated and successful community whose members have historically risen to important positions in government and civil society. Today, Ahmadis are prevented from accessing senior employment in state defence or civil institutions. Faiz ur Rehman (President of Amnesty International Pakistan) described the situation in similar terms: prior to 1974 there had been a large number of Ahmadis in senior positions in the Pakistan administration. This is now no longer the case: there are no Ahmadi policy makers, judges, or educationalists.’ **[51a] (p6, Section 2, Position of Ahmadis in Pakistan)**
- 19.156 The report added that the:
- ‘British High Commission (BHC) also noted the role played by the media. The HRCP described the vernacular press as having become virulently anti-Ahmadi. State television contains broadcasts of anti-Ahmadi rhetoric, including phrases such as “Ahmadis deserve to die.” Even in the traditionally liberal English language press religious freedom is becoming harder to defend as journalists increasingly fear attack if they defend Ahmadis. The BHC stated that public opinion on Ahmadis, encouraged by the vernacular press, is conservative. Whilst Christian rights may be upheld in the press, Ahmadi rights are not. The effect is that most people have accepted the proposition that Ahmadis are non-Muslim and this is as far as they take the issue. However, others use the discrimination as an opportunity for personal or political gain.’ **[51a] (p6, Section 2, Position of Ahmadis in Pakistan)**
- 19.157 The same source recorded that:
- ‘The HRCP stated that the situation faced by Ahmadis today is very poor, and becoming worse as each year passes. In a country where sectarianism is on the increase, the Ahmadis were described by HRCP as being in the worst case scenario: the official policy on religion leaves the group extremely vulnerable. The threat to Ahmadis varies from place to place: in some villages Ahmadis are able to live safely, whilst in others they have been driven out. The reports of violence fluctuate each year but the overall trend of violence against Ahmadis is worsening...The atmosphere of intolerance towards Ahmadis – in which the perpetrators of violence against them are painted as the injured parties – is increasing, and is being indirectly nurtured by the government

who do not defend Ahmadis. Three years ago a member of the judiciary or government would have spoken out against violence or stepped in to defend Ahmadis against attacks in the press, but this is no longer the case...' [51a] (p7, Section 2.1, Social and political environment)

- 19.158 On 7 May 2012, The Express Tribune, citing a report by Jamaat Ahmaddiya, 'Persecution of Ahmedis in Pakistan during the year 2011', published on 2 May, stated 'The Urdu press and media are contributing to the hate campaign against Ahmedis by publishing "baseless stories,"... During 2011 more than 1,173 baseless stories against Ahmedis were published...' [92j]
- 19.159 In monitoring the mainstream Urdu newspapers during 2010 the HRCP Report 2010 found '... 1,468 news, articles and editorials that promoted hate, intolerance or discrimination against the Ahmedis. Hate campaigns against the Ahmedi community also continued across the country through the use of stickers, wall chalking and distribution of pamphlets.' [27e] (p127)
- 19.160 Amnesty International (AI) reported on 2 February 2012 on threats from religious groups attempting to block Ahmadis from entering their place of worship in Rawalpindi on 3 February 2012, and called for the Pakistan authorities to do more to protect the Ahmadi community. The report noted that 'The call comes a week after some 5,000 people demonstrated in favour of demolition of the Ewan-e-Tauheed, one of the largest Ahmadi places of worship in the city of Rawalpindi.' Sam Zarifi, Asia-Pacific Director of Amnesty International, stated: 'Police provided some protection to the Ewan-e-Tauheed to ensure its safety during last Friday's rally. That is an important immediate step, but the Pakistani government must do a lot more to address and reverse the widespread, systematic campaign of vilification against religious minorities in Pakistan.' AI continued 'Last Friday's rally, which was organized by traders' unions and religious groups including Jamaatud Dawa, Jamaat-i-Islami and Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaawas, was also attended by Zia Ullah Shah, a member of the Punjab Assembly from the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz political party that is in government in the province.' [13g]
- 19.161 On 3 February 2012, the Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) also reported on the anti-Ahmadi demonstrations and stated that the protesters held '...banners and posters containing the words of hatred and threats for the Ahmadis community and demanding that they stop their religious practices [including worshipping and proselytizing]. One banner was conveying the message that the Qadianis must be forced to stop their "unconstitutional" activities.' [52h]
- 19.162 Amnesty International also added 'Ahmadi graves have been damaged across the Punjab, with around two dozen desecrated in one instance in December last year [2011] alone. Last month [January 2012], several graves were reportedly damaged in Quetta, in the province of Balochistan.' [13g]
- 19.163 Citing the Jamaat Ahmaddiya annual report from 2 May 2012, The Express Tribune noted on 7 May that since 1984 '... 23 Ahmedi places of worship have been demolished and 28 sealed by the administration. Sixteen places of worship have been taken over, 29 graves have been opened and desecrated. As many as 57 Ahmadis have been refused burial in common graveyards.' [92j]
- 19.164 The SATP reported in its South Asia Intelligence Review Weekly Assessment and Briefings, dated 27 June 2011, that 'On June 10, 2011, the All Pakistan Students Khatm-e-Nubuwwat (End of Prophethood) Federation issued pamphlets branding

members of the Ahmadiyya community as “wajib-ul-qatl” (obligatory to be killed). The pamphlet, circulated in Faisalabad District of Punjab Province, read, “To shoot such people is an act of jihad and to kill such people is an act of sawab (blessing).”’ **[61f] (Volume 9, No. 51)**

19.165 The same source added:

‘On June 13, 2011, reports revealed that terrorists were chalking out a plan to attack prominent members of the Ahmadi community in the country, starting from Faisalabad. Sources in the local Law Enforcement Agencies also revealed that different terrorist outfits have joined together in this mission and had initiated the campaign with the distribution of pamphlets and organization of meetings in local seminaries against the Ahmadis, claiming that the Ahmadi citizens of the country were involved in conspiracies against Islam and Pakistan.’ **[61f] (Volume 9, No. 51)**

19.166 In the PHRG Report 2007, the BHC were reported to have stated that ‘The sensitivity of Ahmadi identity is such that Ahmadis face social isolation. In Mr Rehman’s [President of Amnesty International Pakistan] view the Ahmadis are the most repressed community in Pakistan. Whilst the Christian community face problems, they have profile and support in Pakistan. No-one is exerting pressure on behalf of the Ahmadis.’ **[51a] (p7, Section 2.1, Social and political environment)**

19.167 The PHRG Report 2007 also noted that the BHC stated:

‘...there is under-reporting of Ahmadi persecution, making it difficult to make an accurate assessment of the frequency of attacks against Ahmadis; however, the BHC consider the problems faced by Ahmadis to be a serious issue. The Pakistan government has done little to alleviate the problems faced by Ahmadis: it would be “political suicide” to deal with the Ahmadi problem directly and politicians will not use the example of the Ahmadis to make the case for religious tolerance. The Senior Government Advisor draws a similar conclusion: it is now beyond the power of government to reverse the situation for Ahmadis... changes in the law will not be sufficient to change the view of the population: there must be a change in the views held in society first. However... there is no party or institution prepared to lead the debate on Ahmadis in Pakistan and therefore a change in public attitude is not anticipated in the near future.’ **[51a] (p7, Section 2.1, Social and political environment)**

19.168 Regarding conversion to the Ahmadiyya faith, a Response to Information Request by the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, dated 23 November 2009, stated:

‘In correspondence with the Research Directorate, the National General Secretary of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at Canada stated that a non-Ahmadi Muslim who converts to the Ahmadi faith “will face extreme persecution which could be ... physical torture, expulsion from family, social boycott, murder or a combination of all” ... The Eastern Canada Regional Amir of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at Canada stated that violence against converts can come from both their immediate family and religious leaders ... The Eastern Canada Regional Amir further stated that there is a fatwa [religious ruling] which states that non-Ahmadi Muslims who convert to the Ahmadi faith should be killed within three days of their conversion... Further information on the fatwa could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.’ **[120]**

19.169 The same source added:

'The General Secretary of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Lahore provided the following information on the consequences of both public conversion and private conversion:

- 'If the conversion is declared in public then such a person has to face severe consequences and he would be legally declared non-Muslim and liable to be killed....
- 'If the case is not declared and such conversion remains secret then ... such a person escapes legal punishment but still faces mental torture and prejudicial treatment...

'In a telephone interview with the Research Directorate, the Eastern Canada Regional Amir corroborated that some people do not advertise their conversion to the Ahmadi faith...' [12o]

19.170 The USSD IRF Report 2012 stated that discrimination on the admission of Ahmadis to higher education institutions continued to exist. [3k] (Section II)

Christians

19.171 The SPARC Report 2011 stated, with regards to personal laws of minorities, that:

'The only laws concerning Christians are the Christian Marriage Act 1872 and the Christian Marriage and Divorce Act of 1869. Under the 1869 Act, the only basis for dissolving a marriage is adultery which is treated under the Islamic Law of Evidence 1984. The Islamic Law states that the accuser has to bring at least four sane, adult Muslim male witnesses to prove adultery. The other issues arising out of matrimony, for instance, child custody, inheritance, and adoption, are all dealt with under the general jurisdiction conferred on the Family Courts by the Family Courts Act 1964... the courts accept proof of Christian marriages from priests...' [71b] (p153)

See also Women: [Family laws: marriage, divorce and inheritance](#)

19.172 On 11 August 2010, the Daily Times reported that 'Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani on Tuesday [10 August] said that the government was committed for the preservation of rights of minorities in Pakistan.' In his message declaring 11 August as 'Minorities Day', the Daily Times quoted Prime Minister Gilani as saying "We recognise that our minorities are responsible and patriotic and are playing their due role in nation building. We will, therefore, not allow the miscreants to be successful in their ulterior motives"...' [55b]

19.173 However, Christian Today, an independent, inter-denominational Christian media company, reported on 12 August 2010, that Christians across Pakistan observed 'Black Day' on 11 August, in protest against the discrimination Christians in Pakistan faced. The report noted 'The latest protests were staged by Human Rights Focus Pakistan (HRFP). Representatives of churches, Christian rights groups and believers from all walks of life, participated in a protest rally which ended at the Lahore Press Club.' [119a]

19.174 The same source added that Naveed Walter, President of HRFP, condemned what was to be known as 'Minority Day'. He was quoted as saying that the "...increasing incidents of injustice and discrimination" against Pakistani Christians had prompted his group and other Christian organisations to observe August 11 as "Black Day". [119a]

19.175 Reporting on the recent case in Pakistan which saw a Christian woman sentenced to death under the blasphemy laws, Reuters news noted on 10 January 2011 that 'Christians and Muslims generally live in harmony, but many say they are treat[ed] as second-class citizens and feel insecure for several reasons, including the blasphemy law and sporadic militant attacks on churches... While Muslims are charged with blasphemy in more than 50 percent of cases, human rights activists say the legislation is often used to persecute minorities, or settle personal scores...' **[10f]**

See also [Blasphemy laws](#) and [Death penalty](#)

19.176 The HRCP Report 2009 stated:

'As the militancy surged in the northwestern parts of the country, enforced migration and displacement of thousands of Christians from Swat valley, Peshawar, Mardan, Nowshera and FATA [Federally Administered Tribal Areas] was reported following threats to them to convert to Islam or face death issued by the militants. Forced to take refuge with their relatives in Punjab and Sindh provinces, these families faced immense hardships as the government could not provide adequate succour. At the same time many Christian families victims of the blasphemy law were forced to live in hiding in attempts to save their lives. There was little change in their social ostracization.' **[27c] (p124)**

19.177 The HRCP Report 2009 noted that 'In January [2009], Adiala jail became the first prison in the country to have a church on its premises. The jail authorities had provided land for the church and the local Christian community provided the Rs [Rupees] 1.2 million needed for constructing the building for around 250 Christian prisoners in the jail.' **[27c] (p99)**

See also Section: [Prison Conditions](#)

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Demography

19.178 The Writenet report, Pakistan: The Situation of Religious Minorities, dated May 2009, commissioned by the UNHCR and written by Shaun R. Gregory and Simon R. Valentine, estimated there were three to four million Christians (about two to three per cent of the population) living in Pakistan, with an approximate equal split between Protestants and Catholics. Some sources estimated the number of Christians to be at least twice the official number. The report noted 'Approximately 80 percent of Christians live in the Punjab, with around 14 percent in Sindh, 4 percent in the NWFP, and 2 percent in Balochistan.' **[108a] (p17)**

19.179 The USSD IRF Report 2006 stated that:

'Christians, officially numbered at 2.09 million, claimed to have 4 million members, 90 percent of whom lived in Punjab. The largest Christian denomination was the umbrella Protestant Church of Pakistan, a member of the Anglican Communion. Roman Catholics were the second-largest group, and the remainder belonged to various evangelical denominations. The Catholic diocese of Karachi estimated that 120 thousand Catholics lived in Karachi, 40 thousand in the rest of Sindh, and 5 thousand in Quetta, Balochistan. A few tribal Hindus of the lower castes from interior Sindh have

converted to Christianity... Foreign missionaries operated in the country. The largest Christian mission group engaged in Bible translation for the Church of Pakistan. An Anglican missionary group fielded several missionaries to assist the Church of Pakistan in administrative and educational work. Catholic missionaries, mostly Franciscan, worked with persons with disabilities.’ **[3f] (Section I: Religious Demography)**

Violence and discrimination against Christians

For legislation discriminating against Christians see subsections above on [Blasphemy Laws](#) and [Hudood Ordinances](#)

19.180 The US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) noted in its Annual Report 2013 (USCIRF Report 2013), covering events from 31 January 2012 to 31 January 2013, published April 2013, that:

‘Violence against Christians continued, usually perpetrated by banned militant groups or other societal actors, but also at times at the hands of government officials. USCIRF received reports of 16 different incidents of violent attacks against Christians during the reporting period, with 11 individuals killed. While the murders could not always be definitely linked to religious animus, five churches were attacked by mobs during the reporting period, as were one Catholic hospital and one Christian village. These attacks were on: St. Francis Xavier’s Catholic Cathedral in Hyderabad; St. Francis Catholic Church in Karachi; Bawa Chak Presbyterian Church in Faisalabad; Philadelphia Pentecostal Church in Karachi; St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Mardan; St. Elizabeth Hospital in Hyderabad; and the Christian colony in Lahore. The vulnerable position of Christians in Pakistani society makes them susceptible to such violence.’ **[53d] (p123)**

19.181 The HRCP Report 2012 reported on attacks on Christian places of worship, and observed:

‘In Karachi, at least six churches were attacked, two of them within a period of 10 days in October. In the first of those attacks, around 200 people, who had been protesting against electricity outages, reportedly desecrated the holy books and damaged St Mary’s statues in the church... As many as half of the targeted churches in Karachi were situated in Essa Nagri, one of the largest Christian populated areas in Karachi. In May, St Luke’s Church in Essa Nagri, situated opposite the house of minority parliamentarian Saleem Khokhar, was attacked. The parliamentarian said after the second of the two church attacks in Karachi in October that churches were being attacked to prevent people from practising their religion freely... Police increased security for churches in Islamabad on the eve of Christmas after a threatening letter was sent to Our Lady of Fatima Church in the federal capital.’ **[27b] (p104-105)**

19.182 On 10 March 2013, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty reported on the arrest of 150 people in connection with a Muslim mob attack against the Christian neighbourhood of Badami Bagh in east Lahore. Almost 180 houses were destroyed when 3,000 Muslims rampaged through the town after a Christian man was accused of making blasphemous remarks on 8 March. Chief Minister of Punjab Province, Shahbaz Sharif, offered compensation to families affected by the violence as thousands of Christians marched across Pakistan, demanding better protection from the authorities. **[9c]**

19.183 The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Armed Conflict Database stated in its section on Pakistan (Sectarian violence), Annual Report 2012 – Human Security Developments, that:

'Pakistan's blasphemy laws came under intensive debate when a Christian girl with a learning disability [Rimsha Masih] was detained in August after being accused of burning pages of the Quran. The investigations revealed that a local Imam had planted the Quran pages in her bag. Although the chairman of the All Pakistan Ulema Council, a national council of religious scholars in Pakistan, apologised and vowed to protect the victim, the incident demonstrated the difficulties faced by religious minorities in Pakistan. While many welcomed the statement by the head of council of religious scholars, it is unlikely that these developments will lead to changes in blasphemy laws. The girl was finally released on 23 September and given state protection at an undisclosed location.' **[137a]**

19.184 The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) noted in its quarterly update for Pakistan, dated 30 September 2012, with regards to the Rimsha Masih case, that:

'President Zardari personally took notice of the case and instructed the government to ensure a full investigation. A prominent cleric in the Difa-e-Pakistan Council, and Chairman of the All Pakistan Ulema Council, Allama Tahir Ashrafi, condemned the treatment of the girl and the wider Christian community, who left their homes due to fear of persecution. Rimsha was released on bail in early September after a court found that the evidence against her had been planted. In his speech on 10 August, President Zardari publically acknowledged the problems faced by Pakistan's minorities and emphasised his government's support for ending discrimination.' **[11b]**

19.185 The BBC News reported on 29 June 2013 that Rimsha Masih and her family had fled to Canada. The family were forced to go into hiding in Pakistan after receiving death threats, despite charges against Rimsha being dropped. **[35m]**

19.186 The USCIRF Report 2013 noted 'On March 2, 2011, Shahbaz Bhatti, a longtime Christian activist for religious freedom and the only Christian in Pakistan's federal cabinet, was assassinated outside his mother's home in Islamabad by the Pakistani Taliban. Bhatti had received multiple death threats because of his advocacy against the blasphemy law. The investigation into his murder has seemingly ended and no one is currently in jail.' **[53d] (p122)**

See also [Blasphemy laws](#)

19.187 In a response by its Research Directorate, dated 14 January 2013, the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) cited correspondence sent by the British Pakistani Christian Association (BCPA), who stated :

'... that "a significant portion of Islamic clerics" incite violence and discrimination against Christians... Additionally, it indicated that it is common in both urban and rural areas to use mosque loudspeakers to mobilize hundreds or thousands of militants to take action against religious minorities... Other sources similarly report that mosques have called for violence against Christians... The BPCA explained that if a member of a minority group commits an offence, the whole minority community in the area is considered to be culpable and deserving of punishment...' **[12x]**

19.188 The USCIRF Report 2013 added:

'Marginalization and poverty make the Christian community in Pakistan vulnerable, and sexual assaults against underage Christian girls by Muslim men continue to be reported. Catholic NGOs [non-governmental organisations] estimate at least 700

Christian girls are kidnapped and forced to convert to Islam every year. During the reporting period, two reports surfaced of Christian women being forcibly converted to Islam, married, and then raped, with law enforcement either hesitant to act or societal actors pressuring victims to recant their allegations. Three cases of kidnapping of Christians were also reported.’ **[53d] (p123)**

19.189 The USCIRF Report 2012 noted that during its reporting period, from April 2011 to February 2012 ‘... multiple reports surfaced of Christian women being raped, with law enforcement either hesitant to act or societal actors pressuring victims to recant their allegations. In September 2011, a Christian woman allegedly was gang-raped and police reportedly pressured her to not press charges. In September, the NGO CLASS reported that a court ruled in favor of a Christian girl, sentencing her rapist to jail for 25 years.’ **[53c] (p126)**

19.190 The same source reported on court cases that resulted in convictions and sentences:

‘Two Christian brothers, Pastor Rashid Emmanuel and Sajid Emmanuel, were murdered in July 2010 in front of a courthouse in Faisalabad, Punjab province, as they were defending themselves against blasphemy charges. On April 18, 2011, an anti-terrorism court found the accused guilty and sentenced him to death. Pakistani NGOs report that this is the first such sentence to be issued for a murder related to blasphemy charges. Three individuals convicted of killing a Christian in Punjab province for refusing to convert to Islam were given life sentences in July, which in Pakistan is 25 years. In July 2011, the American Center for Law and Justice reported that three individuals were sentenced to life in prison for the 2010 murder of a Christian businessman.’ **[53c] (p126)**

19.191 The USSD IRF Report 2012 noted that, according to the National Commission for Justice and Peace (NCJP), during the year, 11 Christians were alleged to have committed offences under the blasphemy laws. **[3k] (Section II)**

19.192 The USSD Report 2012 stated:

‘In 2009 Muslim villagers accused a Christian woman, Aasia Bibi, of blasphemy after a dispute at work. Police arrested Bibi, and she was denied bail under the blasphemy laws. In 2010 a court sentenced Bibi to death, the first woman sentenced to death for blasphemy. The verdict touched off a massive debate about the blasphemy laws, with religious extremists calling for her execution and more moderate voices calling for her pardon or an appeal of the guilty verdict. At year’s end Bibi was waiting for her appeal to be heard at the Lahore High Court...’ **[3n] (Section 1e)**

19.193 The HRCP Report 2010 noted with regards to the Aasia Bibi case that ‘Calls by civil society and the Christian community for a presidential pardon for Aasia were met by threats by Taliban and a cleric announcing a reward for anyone who killed her. As extremist elements riled up angry mobs against any change in Aasia’s sentence, the Taliban warned of serious consequences if the government pardoned her.’ **[27e] (p129)**

19.194 The USCIRF Report 2013 stated that Aasia Bibi ‘... remains in jail while her case is on appeal. NGOs report that Ms. Bibi’s health has been affected from being kept separate from the prison population. Her family is in hiding.’ **[53d] (p126)**

See also subsection [Blasphemy laws](#) and the section [Death Penalty](#)

- 19.195 In its report State of the World's Minorities and Indigenous People's 2010, dated 1 July 2010, Minority Rights Group International noted for Pakistan that 'Pakistan's religious minorities continued to face a series of human rights violations and targeted attacks. The country's Christian population face increasing threats to their lives from the Pakistani Taliban, as well as other Muslim extremists, who demand that they convert to Islam. At village level, Christians are also vulnerable to arbitrary arrest and detention, as they have limited access to justice.' **[88c]**
- 19.196 The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) stated in its Country Report for Pakistan, dated 13 August 2009, that:
- 'Taliban ideology has... underpinned an upsurge in attacks against Christians in Pakistan. On August 1st [2009] around 800 Muslims attacked Christians in the town of Gojra, in Punjab province. At least eight Christians were killed following the spread of false rumours that the Quran had been desecrated during a Christian wedding. Christians in other parts of Punjab have also been attacked in recent weeks... Radical Muslim groups and preachers are believed to be responsible for the upsurge in attacks. Demands for sharia law to be applied in Pakistan are linked to the idea that Christians should be expelled from the country.' **[2e] (The Political Scene)**
- 19.197 The USCIRF Report 2012 noted 'During the current reporting period [April 2011-February 2012], the prosecutions of the 2009 attacks in Gojra, where eight Christians were killed and two churches and about 75 houses burned following an accusation that Christians had desecrated the Qur'an, effectively ended. Gojra victims reportedly were pressured to drop their cases. For those that did proceed to trial, all of the alleged attackers were acquitted or granted bail.' **[53c] (p126)**

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Societal attitudes and discrimination

- 19.198 The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) noted in a response by its Research Directorate, on Christians in Pakistan, dated 14 January 2013, that:
- 'In correspondence sent to the Research Directorate, the British Pakistani Christian Association (BPCA), a London-based NGO focusing on human rights abuses in Pakistan against Christians and other religious minorities..., indicated that Christians generally have good relations with other religious minorities and some "more liberal Muslims"... The BPCA noted, however, that because of the strong influence of Islamism over Pakistani society, overall attitudes are overwhelmingly negative...
- 'The BPCA indicated that Christians are considered to be "inferior" and are largely politically powerless and impoverished... Quoted in an Agence France-Presse (AFP) article, the Minister for National Harmony stated that Christians are among "the poorest and most marginalised people" in the country and suggested that discrimination against Christians is motivated not only by religion but also by caste... Other sources similarly report that anti-Christian sentiment is motivated by caste prejudice... An article published by the Vancouver-based weekly newspaper the Georgia Straight explains that the "poorest and most despised section of the population converted to Christianity" and, as a result, "everybody knows that most Christians are really "untouchables""... (2012).

'In correspondence sent to the Research Directorate, a representative of the Evangelical Asian Church, a faith-based charitable organization based in Toronto..., stated that many Pakistanis consider local Christians to be "Western" agents and believe that they act on behalf of "the West" to promote a "foreign agenda"... The representative also suggested that Muslims in Pakistan believe that there are close ties between Christian Pakistanis and "the West" and that attacks on Christians "will be painful to [the] West"... In a similar vein, the Centre for Legal Aid, Assistance and Settlement (CLAAS), a Christian legal aid organization working in Pakistan, reported that Christians were put in a "very critical situation" after a church in Florida burned a copy of the Qur'an, and that Christian properties had been targeted and pastors had received death threats from "religious extremists"...

'The BPCA also stated that there is not a significant difference in the "levels of animosity against Christians" between urban and rural areas, but noted that it is often difficult to obtain information about incidents from rural areas...' [12x]

- 19.199 The USSD IRF Report 2012 noted that 'Discrimination against Christians in employment was widespread. Christians had difficulty finding jobs other than those involving menial labor, although Christian activists stated that the situation had improved somewhat in the private sector in recent years.' (Section III) The report added 'There were no reports of discrimination against Christians when they applied for entry to universities and medical schools.' [3k] (Section II)
- 19.200 On the subject of education, the Christian website AsiaNews reported on 10 July 2010, 'Students of Pakistan's religious minorities, including Christians, are victims of exclusion, discrimination and acts of violence because of their faith and their status. The complaint comes from Minorities Concern of Pakistan (MCP) which says that most of the violations take place in government run institutions and is committed by both classmates by [sic] teachers. The system to protect minorities, they add, is "fragile" and fails to safeguard their rights.' [54b]
- 19.201 World Watch Monitor reported on 19 May 2010 that Muslim teachers at a government high school in Sargodha, Punjab province '...derided Christian students for their faith, beat them, pressured them to convert to Islam and forced them to clean school bathrooms and classrooms after class hours... the school also denied Christian students certificates of completion when they had finished their studies.' [111a]
- 19.202 The Telegraph reported on 27 August 2010 that, according to the Vatican, Christians were being discriminated against by relief agencies in their distribution of flood aid. The report noted:
- 'Christians and members of other minority religions are being treated as second-class citizens, said Father Mario Rodrigues, the Lahore-based director of Catholic Mission. "They often receive little assistance or are excluded altogether," he told Fides, the Vatican's news agency.
- 'Aid is being delivered by "government officials sympathetic to Islamic fundamentalism or by Muslim relief organisations", Fides claimed in its report, citing other unnamed aid workers. About 200,000 Christians in Punjab province and about 600,000 Christians and Hindus in Sindh province have been affected by weeks of monsoon rain.' [104b]
- 19.203 In a press release on Pakistan's Presidential website, dated 1 September 2010, it was reported that:

'President Asif Ali Zardari has taken exception to the media reports that some members of the minority communities were denied flood relief assistance and driven out of the relief camps in Sindh and called for an inquiry and action against officials if found involved.

'Spokesperson to the President Farhatullah Babar said that the President taking note of media reports of a protest rally in Hyderabad on Monday against the maltreatment of Dalits in flood relief called for a probe into the matter and steps to ensure that no discrimination was shown in the relief and rehabilitation operations.

'The President said that floods were a national disaster and should serve to unite the people, not divide them. It will be most unfortunate and reflect poorly on the country's image and adversely impact on national unity if relief work was influenced by considerations of caste, creed or ethnicity. All citizens of the country have equal rights and more so people who have been hit by the worst natural disaster in the history of the country, he said, adding also that discrimination on ethnic or religious grounds cannot be tolerated.

'The President called for an inquiry into the reports of discrimination and taking of appropriate measures to ensure that the relief work was not influenced by such considerations. The President also called for action against officials if found involved in discrimination in the relief and rehabilitation works, the Spokesperson said.' [29h]

For further information on the Floods of July/August 2010 see [Humanitarian issues](#)

19.204 The USSD IRF Report 2006 noted that:

'While many Christians belonged to the poorest socioeconomic groups and faced discrimination, the reason might have more to do with ethnic and social factors than with religion. Many poor Christians remained in the profession of their low-caste Hindu ancestors, most of whom were "untouchables." Their position in society, although somewhat better than in the past, did not reflect major progress despite more than one hundred years of consistent missionary aid and development. Christian students reportedly were forced to eat at separate tables in public schools that are predominately Muslim.' [3f] **(Section III: Societal Abuses and Discrimination)**

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Christian converts

19.205 A Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) official at the British High Commission (BHC) in Islamabad stated in a [letter](#) to the UK Border Agency, dated 2 March 2011:

'We consulted internally with our Political Section, who deal with humanitarian and human rights issues. In short, it is difficult to corroborate the real situation, as this is a frequently hidden problem; our view is that converts would probably not want to draw additional attention to themselves. However, we have ascertained the following anecdotal evidence from our dealings with external contacts in Pakistan:-

'Firstly, in our opinion it would be difficult for Christian converts to live freely and openly in Pakistan, as converts over and above being Christian. It is our view that people who are known to have converted to Christianity suffer serious discrimination, for example in the workplace or by the authorities. It is far more difficult for people in Pakistan who are known to have converted to Christianity, than it is for people who were born Christian.

'We understand that it would be rare for someone to convert to Christianity, or at least to do so openly, in Pakistan. It is therefore something of note for the community, with potential repercussions.

'Our Political Section considered that internal relocation may be possible, in theory, as there were Christian communities in many urban areas such as Rawalpindi, and across Punjab and Sindh provinces. Due to the anonymity afforded by moving to an urban area, it may be feasible to relocate and not reveal the fact of the conversion. However, our view was also that the Christian communities were themselves becoming increasingly isolated from other communities. Therefore whilst it may be more difficult to socially exclude and harass a Christian who lives in a larger Christian community, it does not necessary preclude that harassment.' **[11k]**

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Hindus and Sikhs

19.206 The USCIRF Report 2013 stated:

'Due to their minority status, Pakistan's Hindus are vulnerable to kidnapping, rapes, and forced conversions of Hindu women, including minors. Hindus predominately live in Sindh province, as well as Balochistan. Persistent reports of such abuses continued to arise during the reporting period. Fifteen to 20 Hindu kidnapping cases are reported each month to the Hindu Council in Karachi, and the Human Rights Council of Pakistan has reported that cases of forced conversion are increasing.' **[53d] (p123)**

19.207 The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Armed Conflict Database stated in its section on Pakistan (Sectarian violence), Annual Report 2012 – Human Security Developments, that:

'There were reports of mass migration by Pakistani Hindus to India from fear of persecution and forced conversions. A parliamentary committee's report found that the issue of forced conversions is a major concern for the Hindu community in Pakistan. President Zardari recently directed the Sindh provincial government to draft laws protecting Hindus from forced conversions. There are suggestions that Pakistani Hindus on pilgrimage to India have sought asylum there. However, the Indian government denied these reports in late August.' **[137a]**

19.208 The USCIRF Report 2013 noted that 'USCIRF received reports of 250 Hindu families having left Balochistan and Sindh provinces for India during the reporting period, due to concerns of violence and impunity. The Pakistan Hindu Council (PHC), a non-governmental body representing Hindus in Pakistan, estimates that more than 50 Hindu families are migrating to India from Pakistan every month due to the climate of impunity and fear of violence.' **[53d] (p124)**

- 19.209 The HRCP Report 2012 cited that ‘Forced conversion of Hindu girls often after abduction was a repeated grievance of the Hindu community in Pakistan, especially in Sindh. Once converted, these girls were prohibited from meeting their Hindu families.’ **[27b] (p174)** On this issue, the HRCP added that ‘... the National Assembly’s Standing Committee on Human Rights meeting in October had directed the provincial Home Department to make amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code and set up “safe houses” where the allegedly kidnapped girl could be kept for about a month before being taken to any court for recording their statements.’ **[27b] (p110)**
- 19.210 Reporting on a missing and reportedly abducted Hindu lawyer, the Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) noted on 30 December 2011, that the police had refused to register a case, claiming they could not identify which police jurisdiction was responsible. The AHRC added:
- ‘Murders, kidnappings, looting of Hindu families are on high all around... Pakistan. They are selling their properties at cheap rates and wrapping up their businesses at the cost of big losses. In the recent months 37 Hindus have left Pakistan for India due to security reasons. Hundreds of Hindu families leave Pakistan for India or other countries every year to find safe places for them. Fear has spread among the Sikhs and Hindus of Pakistan after the atrocious beheading incident involving a young Sikh man because of his refusal to convert.’ **[52i]**
- 19.211 The USSD IRF Report 2011 cited:
- ‘The Hindu communities in Sindh and Balochistan reported that they were increasingly the target of kidnappings for ransom. Hindus claimed they were forced to pay ransoms because police did little to recover kidnapping victims. In December 2010, the kidnapping of a Hindu spiritual leader triggered protest demonstrations across Balochistan. Maharaja Luckmi Chand Garji, 82, had been kidnapped along with four companions, near the Surab area of Kalat. He was released in March along with three companions while another individual remained in captivity.’ **[3p] (Section II)**
- 19.212 The HRCP Report 2010 observed ‘The demolition of a temple adjacent to a Shamshan Ghat in Rawalpindi in June triggered protests by the Hindu and Sikh communities. The land had apparently been leased by staff of the government authority administering the site to a person who had been using it for commercial purposes and who demolished the temple. The president ordered an inquiry into the demolition. If the findings of the probe were submitted to the president by the end of the year they were not made public.’ **[27e] (p131)**
- 19.213 However, on a positive note, the USCIRF Report 2012 added that ‘... the 160-year-old Goraknath Hindu temple in Peshawar was reopened on the order of the Peshawar High Court, allowing Hindus in northwest Pakistan to worship there for the first time in 60 years. In addition, the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) reportedly was directed by the federal government to register Sikh marriages.’ **[53c] (p127)**
- 19.214 The SPARC Report 2011 stated, with regard to personal laws, that:
- ‘Whilst the courts accept proof of Christian marriages from priests, there is no such authorization for Hindu marriages. The same goes for laws of inheritance, remarriage, separation and adoption. Likewise, except for the Hindu Women’s Right to Separate Maintenance and Residence Act 1946, there is hardly any codified law in respect of

marriage and divorce for Hindus. Similarly, the government has only recently taken initiatives to institute personal laws for the Sikh community of Pakistan.’ **[71b] (p153)**

- 19.215 The USSD IRF Report 2012 stated ‘The Hindu and Sikh communities, as well as the Scheduled Caste Rights Movement, continued to demand official registration of their marriages. The minorities’ representatives asserted that in the absence of Hindu and Sikh marriage registration, women faced difficulties inheriting their parents’ and husbands’ property, accessing health services, voting, obtaining a passport, and buying or selling property.’ **[3k] (Section II)**
- 19.216 The Indian Institute of Dalit Studies (IDSN) Briefing Note – Pakistan 2012, noted:
- ‘Dalits in Pakistan mostly belong to the Hindu minority and fall victim to double discrimination due to their religious status – as non-Muslims in a Muslim state – as well as their caste. As in neighbouring India, they are officially known as “Scheduled Castes” and suffer numerous forms of abuse, from bonded labour to rape. Crimes against them are often committed with impunity. Officially, the number of Dalits is approximately 330,000 (1998 census), but according to researchers the real figure may be two million, or even higher. These data do not include “lower castes” within the Muslim community, living under similarly depressed conditions. In the first phase of the new national census process, which was started in 2011, no special efforts have been made to ensure accuracy of the data based on caste.’ **[143a] (p1)**
- 19.217 Shirkat Gah – Women’s Resource Centre, Pakistan, made a ‘Stakeholders Joint Submission for Pakistan’s Review in The Human Rights Council -14th Session, October 2012’ (Shirkat Gah Stakeholders Joint Submission), undated, accessed 8 May 2012, in which it stated:
- ‘Hindu married couples face numerous problems when travelling and lodging outside their place of residence. Moreover, Hindu women are deprived of their right to property and other rights conferred upon a divorced or widowed woman, have difficulty in accessing health facilities and are unable to contribute to social, economic and political processes. Hindus have been demanding legislation to register Hindu marriages for years and in 2011 a Bill was presented in the National Assembly to pass a law to register Hindu marriages but so far there has been no progress...’ **[132a] (p7)**
- 19.218 The USSD IRF Report 2012 noted ‘Hindus... faced some difficulty in importing books from India.’ **[3k] (Section II)** The USSD IRF Report 2010 added ‘On September 5, 2009, unidentified extremists set ablaze religious books of Sikhs and Hindus in a joint temple, the Guru Nanak Darbar at Kandhkot, Sindh. The incident deeply disturbed the Hindus and Sikhs throughout the province, and the Pakistan Hindu Foundation issued a call for three-day mourning period, after which Hindus observed a strike in various districts of the province.’ **[3l] (Section II)**
- 19.219 Minority Rights Group International noted in its report State of the World’s Minorities and Indigenous Peoples 2011, published 6 July 2011, that:
- ‘According to last year’s edition of State of the World’s Minorities and Indigenous Peoples, Sikhs in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) controlled by the Taliban were being made to pay a tax, jizya. Pressure on the community has since increased. A group of Sikhs were kidnapped in the Khyber and Orakzai regions in early 2010. The BBC reported that one of the men was later discovered beheaded, although other news agencies reported that two were killed. In April, 72 hectares of gurdwara (i.e.

the Sikh place of worship) property was transferred without due process to the Defense Housing Association.’ **[88d] (p149)**

19.220 The HRCP Report 2011 observed:

‘In July, the Sikh community was prevented from observing a religious festival in Gurdwara Shaheed Bhai Taru Singh in Lahore after the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) decided to deny Sikhs entry into the gurdwara on the eve of Shab-e-Barat. Around four years earlier, a group of Muslim young men had claimed that the gurdwara was built on the site of the burial place of a Muslim saint. The ETPB had allowed both communities to observe their religious rituals according to their beliefs at the gurdwara since then. However, police deployed outside the gurdwara prevented the Sikhs from congregating to commemorate an eighteenth-century saint on July 16 because the Shab-e-Barat was to be observed two days later. HRCP called police deployment to prevent the congregation shocking and entirely uncalled for and said that the ETPB had no right to ask members of a religious faith to postpone rituals of their faith inside their places of worship, or to give precedence to religious rituals of one faith over another.’ **[27g] (p89)**

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Shi’a and Sunni Muslims

19.221 Reporting on different religions, the BBC reported in an article regarding the similarities and differences between Shi’a and Sunni Muslims, updated 19 August 2009, that both sects ‘... agree on the fundamentals of Islam and share the same Holy Book (The Qur’an), but there are differences mostly derived from their different historical experiences, political and social developments, as well as ethnic composition. These differences originate from the question of who would succeed the Prophet Muhammad as leader of the emerging Muslim community after his death.’ **[35e]**

19.222 The same source stated that:

‘When the Prophet died in the early 7th century he left not only the religion of Islam but also a community of about one hundred thousand Muslims organised as an Islamic state on the Arabian Peninsula. It was the question of who should succeed the Prophet and lead the fledgling Islamic state that created the divide.

‘The larger group of Muslims chose Abu Bakr, a close Companion of the Prophet, as the Caliph (politico-social leader) and he was accepted as such by much of the community which saw the succession in political and not spiritual terms. However another smaller group, which also included some of the senior Companions, believed that the Prophet’s son-in-law and cousin, Ali, should be Caliph. They understood that the Prophet had appointed him as the sole interpreter of his legacy, in both political and spiritual terms. In the end Abu Bakr was appointed First Caliph... Muslims who believe that Abu Bakr should have been the Prophet’s successor have come to be known as Sunni Muslims. Those who believe Ali should have been the Prophet’s successor are now known as Shi’a Muslims. It was only later that these terms came into use. Sunni means “one who follows the Sunnah” (what the Prophet said, did, agreed to or condemned). Shi’a is a contraction of the phrase “Shiat Ali”, meaning “partisans of Ali”.

'The use of the word "successor" should not be confused to mean that those leaders that came after the Prophet Muhammad were also prophets - both Shi'a and Sunni agree that Muhammad was the final prophet.' [35e]

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Demography

19.223 The USSD IRF Report 2012 noted that the majority of Muslims in the country are Sunni, with Shi'a representing approximately 25 percent. [3k] (Section I) The USSD IRF Report 2009 added that 'Kurram [in the FATA], is the only tribal agency with a significant Shi'a population, approximately 42 percent of the region's 500,000 inhabitants. Sectarian animosity in Kurram Agency has historically spilled over into sporadic clashes. In 2008, militants increasingly began to exploit these clashes to gain control over key transit points in Kurram linking Pakistan and Afghanistan.' [3c] (Section II: Forced Religious Conversion) Shi'a followers claimed the Shi'a were '... split between the Qom (approximately 40 percent) and Najaf (approximately 60 percent) schools of thought.' (US Department of State International Religious Freedom Report 2006 – USSD IRF Report 2006) [3f] (Section I)

19.224 The USSD IRF Report 2006 added that:

'Government estimates on Shi'a counted approximately 750,000 Ismailis, most of whom were spiritual followers of the Aga Khan. An estimated 80 thousand Ismailis belonged to the Bohra or other smaller schools of thought. Shi'as were found nationwide but had population concentrations in Karachi, Gilgit, and parts of Balochistan. Ismailis were found principally in Hunza, Karachi, and Baltistan. The majority Sunni Muslim community was divided into three main schools of thought (Brailvi, Deobandi, and Ahl-e-Hadith) and a socio-political movement, the Jamaat Islami (JI), which had its own theology, schools, and mosques. Ahl-e-Hadith adherents comprised, at most, 5 percent of Muslims, and were concentrated in Punjab. No reliable figures on JI adherents existed, as its membership always claimed adherence to another school. Its adherents, however, were generally found in urban centers. Brailvi and Deobandi leaders both claimed that their schools comprised up to 80 percent of the overall Muslim population. Most disinterested observers believed that the Brailvi remained the largest school, approximately 60 percent of all Muslims, with the Deobandi at approximately 20 percent but growing. The Brailvi were the dominant majority in Sindh and Punjab. Deobandi were generally found in the Pashtun belt from northern Punjab, across the NWFP, and into northern Balochistan, although there were increasing numbers in Karachi and the Seraiki areas of Punjab.' [3f] (Section I: Religious Demography)

Sectarian Violence

19.225 The South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) noted in its South Asia Intelligence Review, dated 23 April 2012, that:

'Violence against the Shi'ite minority has long been endemic in Pakistan, with a progressive increase in scale and geographical distribution over time. Living in absolute fear, the Shia community, variously estimated at between five and 20 per cent of Pakistan's 187 million population, is currently being targeted in an escalating and vicious cycle of sectarian attacks that have enveloped the entire country.'

'The idea of Shias as a "heretical" sect has become an entrenched dogma of mainstream Sunni politics in Pakistan. On April 18, 2012, National Assembly Standing Committee (NSC) during a meeting told the National Assembly Human Rights Committee (NAHRC) that more than 650 Shias in Quetta, the provincial capital of Balochistan, and 450 in the Dera Ismail Khan District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) were targeted and killed "recently" (no date was specified... though the statement was issued in the context of the Shia-Hazara killings between March 29 and April 17, 2012.)

'According to partial data compiled by South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) there have been at least 772 incidents of sectarian violence in Pakistan from January 1, 2005, to April 22, 2012, which have claimed at least 2,175 lives [these are likely to be underestimates, as information flows from many of the conflict-ridden regions of Pakistan are severely restricted].' **[61I] (Volume 10, No.42)**

19.226 On 5 September 2012, Human Rights Watch also reported on incidences of sectarian violence:

'In the most recent violence, in two separate attacks on September 1, 2012, gunmen attacked and killed eight Hazara Shia in Quetta, Balochistan's capital. In the first attack, witnesses told Human Rights Watch that four armed men riding on two motorbikes shot dead five Hazaras at a bus stop in the Hazar Ganji area of the city. The victims, all vegetable sellers, were returning from the vegetable market. Within two hours of the attack, gunmen riding a motorbike attacked a nearby bus stop, killing two people from the Hazara community. An eighth victim, also a Hazara Shia, died in the hospital on September 2.

'On August 30, gunmen riding a motorbike shot dead Zulfiqar Naqvi, a Shia judge, his driver, Essa Khan, and a police bodyguard, Abdul Shakoor, as Naqvi headed to work in Quetta.

'On August 16, four buses passing through the Babusar Top area of Mansehra district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (formerly the North-West Frontier Province) were ambushed by gunmen who made all the passengers disembark. The attackers checked the national identity cards of each passenger and summarily executed 22 passengers identified as belonging to the Shia community. A spokesman for the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, the Pakistani Taliban, claimed responsibility for the killings.' **[7k]**

19.227 The Human Rights Watch World Report 2013, Pakistan, dated 31 January 2013, stated:

'In 2012, at least 325 members of the Shia Muslim population were killed in targeted attacks that took place across Pakistan. In Balochistan province, over 100 were killed, most of them from the Hazara community. On August 16, gunmen ambushed four buses passing through the Babusar Top area of Mansehra district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The attackers forced all the passengers to disembark, checked their national identity cards, and summarily executed 22 travelers whom they identified as belonging to the Shia community. A spokesman for the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, the Pakistani Taliban, claimed responsibility. On August 30, gunmen shot dead Zulfiqar Naqvi, a Shia judge, in Quetta, Balochistan's capital. In two separate attacks on September 1, 2012, gunmen attacked and killed eight Hazara Shia in Quetta.' **[7i] (Religious minorities and women)**

19.228 Whilst citing examples of violence against Shi'a Muslims during the reporting period, from 31 January 2012 to 31 January 2013, the USCIRF Report 2013 also noted that:

'Militants and terrorist organizations targeted Shi'i processions and mosques with impunity during the reporting period. Organizations such as Human Rights Watch put the number of Shi'a killed over the past year at over 400. Attacks occurred across Pakistan, but particularly large bombings occurred in the province of Balochistan. Information collected by USCIRF during the reporting period, which is not exhaustive, documented approximately 50 incidents of violent attacks causing death, as well as 10 different attacks with explosive devices or suicide bombers. Shi'i activists have referred to the level and severity of attacks as constituting genocide.

'The response by the Pakistani government has been grossly inadequate. While at times police were present when attacks occurred, they were unable to stop attackers before people were killed. Recognizing this inadequacy, in September 2012, a panel of three Supreme Court judges, led by Pakistan's Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry, issued a highly critical statement of government efforts to bring security in Quetta, the capital of Balochistan. Federal rule was imposed in Balochistan after a large bombing in January 2013. This move came in part as a result of families of the deceased refusing to bury the dead until there was an adequate governmental response. However, the government has proven unwilling or unable to crack down on groups that repeatedly plan, conduct, and claim credit for attacks, or prevent future violence.' **[53d] (p120-121)**

19.229 The SATP's South Asia Intelligence Review, dated 23 April 2012, added:

'Anti-Shia extremist groups and Sunni terrorist formations such as the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) share their larger goals of making "Pakistan a graveyard for the Shias" and 'exterminating the community from Pakistan by 2012," in the words of a June 2011 LeJ pamphlet. LeJ, the breakaway faction of the Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), in June 2011, distributed pamphlets calling Shias 'wajib-ul-qatl' (obligatory to be killed), and also issued an open letter against the Hazara-Shia community in Quetta. The letter of the Balochistan Unit of the outfit read,

"All Shias are wajib-ul-qatl. We will rid Pakistan of the unclean race. The real meaning of Pakistan is pure land and Shias have no right to live here. We have the fatwa (religious edict) and signatures of the ulama (religious scholar) in which the Shias have been declared kaafir [infidel]. Just as our fighters have waged a successful jihad against the Shia-Hazaras in Afghanistan, our mission [in Pakistan] is the abolition of this impure sect, the Shias and the Shia-Hazaras, from every city, every village, every nook and corner of Pakistan..."' **[61I] (Volume 10, No.42)**

For further information on Hazaras see Ethnic groups: [Hazaras](#)

19.230 Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment for Pakistan noted in its chapter on Security, updated 23 April 2012, that:

'Pakistan has experienced a persistently high level of sectarian violence throughout much of its history, with the minority Shia Muslim community, which makes up approximately 20 per cent of the population, clashing with the majority Sunni Muslims. Violence intensified in the 1980s, following Sunni fears of increasing Shia influence following the Iranian revolution and the subsequent funding of Sunni madrassahs and institutions by Saudi Arabia throughout the Middle East. The key anti-Shia extremist group, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), remains a potent threat to security, despite a ban put in place in 2002. Overall sectarian violence fell steadily in 2003, but the trend was reversed in 2004. Anti-Shia violence has risen substantially since 2008, and is highly likely to persist throughout 2012.' **[1a] (Social stability)**

19.231 The HRCP Report 2012 recorded a number of attacks that occurred during that year, stating:

‘No part of Pakistan was spared in the senseless spilling of blood on the basis of sectarian belief. As many as 159 people were killed in 95 attacks in Karachi (Sindh), most of whom were professionals; 130 in 51 attacks in Quetta and 31 in five attacks in Mastung (Balochistan); 22 in one attack in Rahimyar Khan and 23 in one attack in Rawalpindi (Punjab); 19 each in two separate attacks in Kohistan and Mansehra districts (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa); 65 in nine attacks in Kurram Agency and 13 in one attack in Orakzai (FATA); and 10 in 18 attacks in Gilgit and nine in one attack in Diamer (Gilgit Baltistan). The casualties occurred in drive-by targeted killings, incidents of multiple execution-style killings of Shia men travelling in vans and buses, suicide bombings and bomb and grenade explosions. The attackers targeted mosques, imambargahs, madrassas, students and teachers of seminaries, as well as religious gatherings, and often anyone subscribing to a particular sect.’ **[27b] (p102)**

19.232 The USSD IRF Report 2012 cited ‘Attacks on houses of worship, religious gatherings, and religious leaders perpetrated by sectarian, violent extremist, and terrorist groups resulted in hundreds of deaths during the year. Sectarian violence increased during the year.’ **[3k] (Section II)**

19.233 The South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) provided statistics on sectarian violence in Pakistan from 1989 to 2013 (based on news reports), accessed 21 June 2013, and stated that in 2012 there were 507 deaths and 577 people injured in 173 sectarian incidents. Between 1 January 2013 and 16 June 2013, SATP recorded 58 sectarian incidents, 285 deaths and 422 people injured. **[61a] (Sectarian Violence in Pakistan)**

See also Security situation: [Sectarian violence](#)

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20. Ethnic groups

20.01 The Asian Centre for Human Rights stated in its report to the UN Commission Against Racial Discrimination, published August 2007, that:

‘The key ethnic groups in Pakistan are Punjabis (44.15% of the population) followed by Pakhtuns (15.42%), Sindhis (14.1%), Seraikis (10.53%), Muhajirs (7.57%) and Balochis (3.57%). The others smaller ethnic groups include Turwalis, Kafiristanis, Burusho, Hindko, Brahui, Kashmiris, Khowar, and Shina, and the Kalash etc. In addition, Pakistan had accommodated largest number of Afghan refugees comprising of the Pakhtuns, Tajiks, Uzbeks, Turkmen, Hazaras, etc and many of these refugees permanently settled in the country. A large number of Bengalis, Arabs, Burmese, and African Muslim refugees have also permanently settled in Karachi, whilst hundreds of thousands of Iranian migrants are scattered throughout the country.’ **[67a] (p13)**

20.02 The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, observed that ‘The constitution provides for equality for all citizens and broadly prohibits discrimination based on race, religion, caste, residence, or place of birth; however, in practice there was significant discrimination based on each of these factors.’ **[3n] (Section 6)**

Baloch

20.03 Minority Rights Group International recorded in its Pakistan profile on the Baloch (Baluch) people, updated June 2009, that:

‘The Baluchis are the indigenous peoples of Baluchistan, which is split between the Pakistani province of Baluchistan and Iranian Baluchistan. The majority of the Baluch people reside in the Baluchistan province of Pakistan. Baluchistan is the largest of all provinces of modern-day Pakistan, making up nearly two-fifths of the entire country... According to the most recent population census held in 1998, the total population of Baluchistan consisted of 6.5 million out of the total Pakistani population of 131 million. In 2006 the population of Baluchis in Pakistan was estimated as 8.2 million... Baluchis are largely Sunni Muslims, followers of the Hanafi school.’ **[88b]**

20.04 The Foreign Policy Journal reported on 18 April 2010 that:

‘Balochistan is a region that is spread across Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan. The combined area of this region is around 600,000 square kilometers, which is about the size of Ukraine; 347,000 km² is part of Pakistan, 181,785 km² in Iran and around 70,000 km² in Afghanistan. Despite having large areas in Pakistan and Iran, the Baloch population is around 5 million and 2 million respectively in both the countries. It is estimated that more than 200,000 Baloch people live in southern Afghanistan.’ **[112a]**

20.05 The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) noted in a press release on 8 June 2009, regarding an event to discuss the human rights situation in Balochistan, that the Baloch are:

‘...a minority community who have been politically and economically marginalized by the Pakistani government. These violations include indiscriminate use of force against civilians, targeted killings and the disappearance of political activists and journalists. Hundreds of thousands of civilians are said to have been displaced across province boundaries into Sindh and Punjab and state boundaries into Afghanistan, underlining the regional and international nature of the problem.’ **[87]**

20.06 UNPO further noted that ‘The region [of Balochistan] is exceptionally rich in natural resources which has encouraged exploitative domestic and external intervention.’ **[87]**

See also Section: Security situation: Militant Activity: [Balochistan](#)

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Hazaras

20.07 BBC News reported on 1 May 2013 that at least 600,000 Hazara’s lived in Quetta, Balochistan, most of whom were Shia Muslim. The report noted ‘Hazaras are ethnically Mongolian, with oriental features and light skin, different from much of Pakistan’s population.’ The article reported on the deaths of more than 120 people, mostly from the Hazara Shia community, following two bomb attacks in Quetta on 10 January 2013. **[35I]**

20.08 An Australian Government Refugee Review Tribunal on Hazara’s in Pakistan, dated 3 May 2011, stated that:

'The vast majority of ethnic Hazaras in Pakistan are Shi'ite Muslims, primarily of the Twelver sect. Of the estimated 600,000 Hazaras living throughout Pakistan, at least half live in the province of Baluchistan. However, Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) states that, by its estimation, there are at least 350,000 Hazaras living in Quetta alone, with as many as 70,000 living in the Quetta suburb of "Hazara Town"... (p1)

'While the city of Quetta is home to the largest ethnic Hazara community in Pakistan, there are approximately 300,000 Hazaras living outside of Baluchistan... The "Hazaras" in the Hazara Division of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa who feature regularly in news coverage are not Persian/Dari speaking ethnic Hazaras, but in fact un-related Hindko-speaking Pashtuns. Hazara Colony, a large suburb of Karachi that also features regularly in news coverage is also primarily populated by Hindko-speaking Pashtuns from Hazara Division.' [134e] (p3)

20.08 On 17 February 2013, at least 84 people, the majority Shia Hazaras, were killed when a bomb exploded at a vegetable market in Quetta. The armed group, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), claimed responsibility for this attack, and the one on 10 January, cited above. (Amnesty International, 18 February 2013) [13m]

20.09 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its annual report, 'State of Human Rights in 2012' (HRCP Report 2012), published March 2013, on violence against the Hazara-Shia community in Balochistan. The report stated:

'Although the Hazaras of Balochistan, an ethnically distinct group that is almost exclusively Shia, have suffered repeated massacres over the last decade and a half only because of their belief, they have been targeted much more frequently than even the other Shias in Quetta and its surroundings. That is because the Hazaras are easily recognisable on account of their distinct features. As many as 119 Hazaras were killed in targeted attacks in Quetta and its peripheries in 2012. An HRCP fact-finding mission that visited Balochistan from May 15 to 19 in order to assess the situation of human rights in the province met with members of the Hazara community. They believed that if the authorities wanted to protect them the state had the capacity to do so.

'In June, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi terrorists attacked a bus of Balochistan IT University carrying Hazara students, killing five of them. The frequency of attacks on the Hazaras was such that non-Hazara students of the university stated their unwillingness to share a bus with the Hazaras for fear of being targeted. Persecuted for their belief, the Hazaras of Quetta have retreated to just two localities of the city for the sake of safety. The two localities have been increasingly attacked in recent years, often with dozens of casualties.' [27b] (p101-102)

20.10 Human Rights Watch noted in its World Report 2012, Pakistan, dated 22 January 2012, that:

'On September 19 [2011], 26 members of the Hazara community travelling by bus to Iran to visit Shia holy sites were forced to disembark by gunmen near the town of Mastung and shot dead. Three others were killed as they took the injured to a hospital. Lashkar-e-Jhangvi claimed responsibility. On October 4, gunmen riding on motorbikes stopped a bus carrying mostly Hazara Shia Muslims who were headed to work at a vegetable market on the outskirts of Quetta, Balochistan's capital. The attackers forced the passengers off the bus, made them stand in a row, and opened fire, killing 13 and wounding 6.' [7h] (Religious Minorities)

- 20.11 The website Hazara.net, a non-profit site focused on the human rights of Hazaras and the promotion of Hazara culture, accessed 27 June 2013, provided news and reports on human rights issues involving members of the Hazara community. **[98a]**

See also Security situation: [Sectarian violence](#)

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Mohajirs

- 20.12 The website Minorities at Risk (MAR), dated 31 December 2006, reported that, constituting eight per cent of the population, the Mohajirs, literally meaning ‘refugee’:
- ‘... are the Urdu-speaking Muslims who fled India after the 1947 partition of the sub-continent and their descendents. Group members are concentrated in Sindh Province, particularly in urban areas... [They] are primarily Sunni Muslims, though some are Shi’a. However, most Mohajirs’ primary identity is not religious but revolves around their “outsider” status. Competition with native Sindhis has defined Mohajirs’ political and economic situation in Pakistan more than any other factor... Mohajirs are mainly represented by the MQM and its various factions.’ **[32a]**

Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM)

- 20.13 The website Global Security.org, accessed 24 June 2013 reported that:
- ‘The Muttahidda [Mothaidda] Quami Movement (MQM), formerly known as the Mohajir Quami Movement, is a political group which represents the Urdu-speaking immigrant urban Mohajir population... The Mohajir Quami Movement [MQM] came into being on March 18, 1984 as the “All Pakistan Mohajir Students Organisation” (APMSO) but politically it was activated in 1986. The Head Office of MQM – generally known as “Nine Zero” – is in Karachi. Khidmat-e-Khalq Foundation (KKF) is a charitable organisation affiliated with MQM.’ **[63a]**
- 20.14 The same source noted that:
- ‘The Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Ataf (MQM-A) [led by Ataf Hussain] has been widely accused of human rights abuses since its founding two decades ago... the MQM-A was heavily involved in the widespread political violence that wracked Pakistan’s southern Sindh province, particularly Karachi, the port city that is the country’s commercial capital. MQM-A militants fought government forces, breakaway MQM factions, and militants from other ethnic-based movements.’ **[63a]**
- 20.15 Global Security.org also noted ‘In 1992, a breakway MQM faction, led by Afaq Ahmed and Aamir Khan, launched the MQM Haqiqi (MQM-H), literally the “real” MQM. Many Pakistani observers alleged that the MQM-H was supported by the government of Pakistan to weaken the main MQM led by Ataf Hussein...’ **[63a]**
- 20.16 Jane’s Sentinel Country Risk Assessments noted in its section on Security, updated 23 April 2012, that the Mohajir’s main representative was:

‘... the United National Movement, known in Pakistan and India as the Muttahida (initially Mohajir) Qaumi Movement, or MQM. Throughout the mid- to late 1990s, the MQM effectively effectively caused considerable violence across Karachi, targeting

police and government officials as well as their families. The MQM is divided between a parliamentary wing that has gained representation in the provincial legislatures and National Assembly and a terrorist wing campaigning for greater autonomy or separatism. The campaign against MQM-supporting terrorist groups has been largely successful, but Karachi remains mired in violence, with several ethnic groups involved in acts of terrorism against each other and the state. More than 750 people died in politically motivated attacks in Karachi in 2010. More than 50 people were killed when violence broke out on 16 October during a by-election for a provincial assembly seat that was previously held by local MQM politician Raza Haider, who was murdered in a Karachi mosque on 2 August 2010. Violence and a spate of targeted killings in mid-January 2011 raised tensions across the city. A former MQM deputy and political activists were among the dead. After a brief lull, the killing spree resumed in mid-March with rights groups reporting over 150 casualties by the end of May, forcing the PPP to counsel restraint. Violence in Karachi shows no sign of abating with over 300 casualties reported in July alone.' **[1a] (Social Stability)**

- 20.17 The HRCP Report 2010 stated 'For the past five years, the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) had been striving to extend its outreach to Punjab. In 2010, the MQM again stepped up its political activities in the province and nominated 2,800 office-bearers in the province. The Punjab government, however, refused the MQM permission to hold a public meeting in Lahore for security reasons. However, the provincial government allowed the party to hold a convention in a building on The Mall.' **[27e] (p175)**
- 20.18 The Nation reported on 26 May 2011 that Aamir Khan, chief of Mohajir Qaumi Movement-Haqqiqi (MQM-H), announced he was rejoining the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM, also known as MQM-A) led by Altaf Hussain, after two decades of rivalry. The report noted 'Aamir Khan former senior member of MQM left the party in 1991 and formed its own party MQM-Haqqiqi with Afaq Ahmed in 1992 but the association of both the leaders ended after the differences in 2006. Muttahida Qaumi Movement Chief Altaf Hussain has accepted Aamir Khan's apology, making way for him to rejoin the party and reinstate his party membership.' **[103a]**

See also Political affiliation: [Politically motivated violence](#)

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21. Sexual orientation and gender identity

- 21.01 The International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) noted in its report Human Rights and Transgender People in Pakistan, published February 2008 (IGLHRC Report 2008), that:

'There is no known grassroots activism among lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transsexuals and transgender (zenana) communities in Pakistan. This lack of activism, the silences around sexualit(ies), and deeply closeted status of most gays and lesbians in Pakistan (many of whom live double lives to avoid revealing their sexual orientation) makes it difficult to accurately assess their living conditions and human rights situation. Anecdotal information from Pakistani gay people who have left the country describes fear, secrecy, isolation, suicides, forced marriage, family and community pressure to conform to heterosexual norms.' **[49]**

Information on the legal rights and treatment of lesbians, bisexual men and women, and intersex persons, was limited, or could not be found by COI Service amongst the sources accessed in this section, at the time of writing (July 2013).

Gay men and lesbians

21.02 Information on the legal rights and treatment of lesbians was limited, or could not be found by COI Service amongst the sources accessed in this section, at the time of writing (July 2013).

To help understand the position of lesbians and bisexual women in Pakistan, please refer to the sections on [Women](#) and [Children](#), for an overview of the status of women and girls in Pakistan society in general.

Legal rights

21.03 The full text of Section 377 of the Pakistan Penal Code reads:

‘377. Unnatural offences: Whoever voluntarily has carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal, shall be punished with imprisonment for life, or with imprisonment of either description for a term which shall not be less than two years nor more than ten years, and shall also be liable to fine.

‘Explanation: Penetration is sufficient to constitute the carnal intercourse necessary to the offence described in this section.’ **[21a]**

21.04 The ‘Sodomy laws’ website, last edited on 24 November 2007, reported that the penalty may also include ‘... a possible corporal punishment of a 100 lashes.’ The same source added that:

“Islamic law was re-introduced in 1990.” Pakistani civil law punishes those who have gay sex with two years to life in prison, while Islamic law, which also can be enforced legally, calls for up to 100 lashes or death by stoning... [While it seems unlikely that Section 377 would apply to lesbians, it seems likely that Islamic law would] . Arrests and trials do not occur ... As elsewhere with unenforced sodomy prescriptions, the existence of the law is a threat - a threat conducive to blackmail. While the law is largely irrelevant to life in Pakistan, those acting in its name are not...Police recurrently take money and/or sex from those they know to be involved in same-sex sex (commercial or not). (Chapter on Pakistan by Stephen O Murray and Badruddin Khan in “Sociolegal Control of Homosexuality”).’ **[50]**

21.05 An Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) report, dated 29 November 2007, on gay relationships in Pakistan noted that:

‘Homosexual acts are illegal in Pakistan. Under Section 377 of the country's penal code, homosexuality is not explicitly mentioned, but “carnal intercourse against the order of nature” is punishable by a fine and/or imprisonment for a period of two years to life. Under the country's Sharia law, introduced in 1990, homosexual acts are punishable by corporal punishment (whipping), imprisonment, or death. Likewise, gay marriage is illegal in Pakistan. However, in October 2005, a “marriage” was said to have taken place between two men in the Khyber region. A tribal council reportedly told the couple to leave the area or face death for “breaking religious and tribal values”. In May 2007, a married couple was imprisoned after the Lahore high court decided that the husband,

who had undergone sex-change surgery, was still a woman. The couple had originally sought the court's protection against members of the bride's family who were harassing them; however, the court found the couple guilty of perjury, ruling that they had lied about the husband's gender and that their same-sex marriage was "un-Islamic". One month later, following an appeal to Pakistan's Supreme Court, the couple was released on bail...' [12c]

See also [Transgender persons](#)

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Treatment by, and attitude of, state authorities

- 21.06 The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, cited that:
- 'Consensual same-sex sexual conduct is a criminal offense; in practice, the government rarely prosecuted cases. Gay men and lesbians rarely revealed their sexual orientation. No laws protect against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. Systematic discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons was widely acknowledged privately, but insufficient data existed for accurate reporting on these forms of discrimination, due in part to severe societal stigma and fear of recrimination for those who come forward.' [3n] (Section 6)
- 21.07 The IRB Research Directorate stated in a response regarding the treatment of sexual minorities by society, government and religious authorities in Pakistan, dated 30 November 2011, that 'According to the WEWA [Women Employees Welfare Association] representative, "discrimination" by the state of Pakistan against sexual minorities is "encoded, institutionalized and enforced"... This is done through "discriminatory legal provisions that criminalize homosexuality" and "lack of expressed constitutional provisions on non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation"...' [12t]
- 21.08 The same source noted that, according to the WEWA representative, 'In addition, at both national and local levels, the government does not legally or socially accept sexual minorities and "[t]heir basic fundamental rights to existence, education and earning livelihood opportunities are openly infringed"... The Neengar Society representative also noted that government authorities discriminate against sexual minorities...' [12t]
- 21.09 The IRB Research Directorate added that '...according to the Neengar Society, in 2011, the organization is aware of 10 cases in the Punjab city of Multan that fell under Article 377 on "unnatural offenses"... In follow-up correspondence, the Neengar society representative noted that all 10 cases were prosecuted, with 2 resulting in a 10-year prison sentence... As of 6 November 2011, the rest of the cases were still in the high court of Multan with hearings taking place...' [12t]
- 21.10 The Express Tribune reported on 6 March 2012 that 'Pakistan along with all 57 countries belonging to the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) at the UN have declared opposition to the upcoming UN Human Rights Council's discussion on discrimination and violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people.' [92k]

- 21.11 The report noted that, in a letter to the UN Human Rights Council, Pakistani Ambassador to the UN, Zamir Akram, stated LGBT rights had “nothing to do with fundamental human rights”, declared same-sex relationships as “abnormal sexual behaviour” and that “the issue of sexual orientation is unacceptable to the OIC.” The letter concluded by saying that “the Member States of the OIC would like to place on record their opposition to the holding of this panel and will not accept its considerations and recommendations.” **[92k]**
- 21.12 Reuters India reported on 25 May 2010 that police in Peshawar arrested an entire wedding party, including the bride and groom, at a ceremony between a man and a transgender person, stating they had ‘...registered a case against them for promoting homosexuality in the society.’ However, the so-called groom claimed the party was for his birthday. The pair were remanded in custody for two weeks. **[10a]**
- 21.13 The Spartacus International Gay Guide 2009, undated, stated in the section on Pakistan that there was no gay movement or gay groups in Pakistan. The Guide noted that ‘Despite the strict laws of Islam regarding moral standards, gay men, transvestites and transexuals live relatively undisturbed from the police.’ However, the Guide noted gay men would receive little protection from the authorities. The same source stated that ‘The general population and the family does not see homosexuality in a positive light at all, but is generally tolerant enough to accept the situation as long as they are not affected.’ **[25] (p686)**
- 21.14 On recourse and protection, the IRB’s response of 30 November stated:

‘The representative of the Neengar Society stated that sexual minorities do not have the option of legal recourse against discrimination, abuse or violence... According to WEWA, sexual minorities have “limited options” when it comes to finding recourse to discrimination, abuse or violence, as they are not legally recognized... The Neengar Society representative stated that “[w]hen it comes to shelter, asylum and other sort[s] of legal help ... even civil society is unwilling to help,” although the Neengar society’s own efforts include a legal aid program that provided 200 transgenders with free legal services in 2010-2011...

‘Furthermore, according to the WEWA representative, “[s]exual minorities are oppressed and victimized by the police. The oppression ranges from extortion, illegal detention and sexual abuse [to] dirty language and humiliation”...

‘An article published by the International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU), an “international NGO with Special Consultative Status at the UN” that subscribes to a humanist vision of the world..., similarly indicates that because homosexuality is illegal, even though very few arrests and convictions are made, the police will “usually blackmail” and “extort” a “known homosexual;” this type of extortion is not limited to the police, and can include any person that finds out about a person’s non-heterosexual orientation...’ **[12t]**

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Societal treatment and attitudes

21.15 The IRB Research Directorate's response on sexual minorities, dated 30 November 2011, stated that:

'In correspondence with the Research Directorate, a country adviser to the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) for Pakistan noted that "the very word "gay" is currently considered part of a "western framework" for the majority of Pakistan's population that "does not have any roots in the local culture"... Similarly, a representative of the Women Employees Welfare Association (WEWA), a Lahore-based organization working on gender equality and sexual minority rights, who is also a practicing lawyer, stated in correspondence with the Research Directorate that same-sex behaviour is "dismissed" as being a "western phenomenon"...

'The WEWA representative said that "[s]exual minorities are not socially accepted" in Pakistan, with the major part of society denying their "existence"... The American Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) also notes that there is "little public acceptance of the notion that someone can love a member of the same sex"...' [12t]

21.16 On 3 November 2012, The New York Times reported on a support group for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Pakistanis, based in Lahore that met irregularly, at a secret location. The report noted that, despite homosexual acts being illegal and no civil legislation to protect LGBT persons from discrimination:

'... the state's willful blindness has provided space enough for gays and lesbians. They socialize, organize, date and even live together as couples, though discreetly.

'One journalist, in his early 40s, has been living as a gay man in Pakistan for almost two decades. "It's very easy being gay here, to be honest," he said, though he and several others interviewed did not want their names used for fear of the social and legal repercussions. "You can live without being hassled about it," he said, "as long as you are not wearing a pink tutu and running down the street carrying a rainbow flag." [115a]

21.17 The report continued '... while the notion of homosexuality may be taboo, homosocial, and even homosexual, behavior is common enough. Pakistani society is sharply segregated on gender lines, with taboos about extramarital sex that make it almost harder to conduct a secret heterosexual romance than a homosexual one. Displays of affection between men in public, like hugging and holding hands, are common. "A guy can be with a guy anytime, anywhere, and no one will raise an eyebrow," the journalist said.' [115a]

21.18 The IRB Research Directorate noted in its response dated 30 November 2011 that:

'A representative of the Neengar Society, a non-profit organization working in Pakistan for the rights of religious and sexual minorities..., noted in correspondence with the Research Directorate that Pakistani society has a "very diverse attitude towards sexual minorities depending on the type of sexual identity of a person"... In contrast, the WEWA representative stated that Pakistan is a "traditional and conservative society" where "sexual minorities, irrespective of sexual identity, are treated adversely[,] ... suffer various forms of discrimination in both public and private spheres [and] ... are victimized by state, society, religious groups and the family"...

'Sources indicate that homosexual males and females are reluctant to reveal their sexual identity... The representative of the Neengar Society noted that, if a person's

“non-heterosexual” orientation is revealed, life can become “miserable,” as he or she can become a victim of “teasing, bashing, ... beating or threat[s]”...

‘According to the Neengar Society representative, gay and bisexual men face “worse problems” than lesbians and transgendered people, such as “hatred” and “violence,” because, in the Quran, many were “destroyed” for engaging in romantic or sexual relations with other men... However, transgendered people are not exempt from negative treatment if they are known to engage in homosexual acts... According to the Country Adviser [from IGLHRC], upper class homosexual men tend to “contract heterosexual marriages to keep enjoying the benefits of their status”...’ **[12t]**

- 21.19 Viewpoint, and online journal for Pakistan, published an article, on homosexuality, by social activist, Waseem Altaf, dated 14 February 2013, which stated:

‘... various schools in Islam treat homosexuality differently. For instance the Hanafi School does not consider same-sex intercourse to constitute adultery, and therefore leaves punishment up to the judge's discretion. Most early scholars of this school specifically ruled out the death penalty, others allow it for a second offence. Imam Shafi'i considers same-sex intercourse as analogous to other zina; thus, a married person found to have done so is punished as an adulterer by stoning to death, and an unmarried one, as a fornicator, is left to be flogged. The Maliki School says that anyone (married or unmarried) found to have committed same-sex intercourse should be punished as an adulterer. Within the Ja'fari schools, Sayyid al-Khoi says that anyone (married or unmarried) found to have committed same-sex intercourse should be punished as an adulterer.’ **[26a]**

- 21.20 On the subject of societal attitudes to homosexual activity the IRB Research Directorate, dated 29 November 2007, stated that:

‘Although homosexuality is thought to be “relatively” common in Pakistan, it is a “taboo” subject that is not publicly discussed. It is reportedly rare for homosexuals to be open about their sexuality. According to a 10 May 2005 article published by the United Nations (UN) Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), homosexuals in Pakistan “live in constant fear of being “outed” in [the country’s] staunchly conservative society which is largely ignorant and intolerant of sexual minorities.” Cited in the same article, a representative of a local non-governmental organization (NGO) stated that if an individual openly campaigned for gay rights in the country, he or she could end up being killed by religious followers. Nevertheless, several sources consulted by the Research Directorate indicate that homosexuality may, in general, be “silently accepted” in Pakistan. Assaults on homosexuals are said to be “rare”. In the country's North West Frontier Province (NWFP), it is apparently well known that ethnic Pashtun men take young boys as lovers which, according to IRIN, is “a practice now deeply embedded in the local culture”. In March 2006, a group of gay men wearing dresses participated in a festival in Lahore. The Internet is reportedly contributing to a sense of growing “solidarity” amongst homosexuals in Pakistan. Online chat rooms are said to provide a “safe and anonymous forum for middle- and upper-class gay men”.’ **[12c]**

- 21.21 The same response continued:

‘According to a 5 October 2005 British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) article, “increasingly,” same-sex couples are living together in Pakistan's larger cities, including Karachi and Islamabad. However, a 2006 Guardian article states that it is “rare” for homosexual couples to live together and that many gay men end up marrying women to

“avoid scandalising their families”. Another article from IRIN notes that, while the atmosphere in larger cities such as Islamabad, Karachi and Lahore is “mildly” more tolerant, in rural areas, conservatism is “extreme” and homosexuals remain “closeted”. Two sources indicate that cultural practices in Pakistan, which permit public displays of affection between members of the same gender, make it possible for gay men to socialize without attracting attention.’ [12c]

21.22 On the subject of female couples, the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) Report 2008 observed that ‘In Pakistan, two women can share a home, but not as intimate partners.’ [49]

21.23 With regards to treatment of LGBT persons by religious authorities, the IRB response of 30 November 2011 stated:

‘According to the Neengar Society representative, religious authorities are “anti-sexual minorities”... The WEWA representative stated that “religious authorities take non-heterosexual behaviour as a serious and immoral offence” and can turn to violence, suggesting punishments such as “stoning or [being] buried alive”...

‘The IGLHRC country adviser noted that religious authorities operate with “impunity”... According to the Country Adviser, activists are “careful in promoting and propagating [their] causes because the over arching “Blasphemy Law” can get anyone into trouble”... He also noted that mullahs do not have to take anyone to the police that they think is homosexual, and they “can brutalize, shave heads, gang rape the zenanas,” men who identify themselves as women, on the pretext of “teaching them [a] lesson”...’ [12t]

See also [Transgender persons](#)

21.24 The same source reported on the US embassy’s gay pride event in June 2011, stating:

‘Agence France Presse (AFP) reports that on 4 July 2011 there were “Islamist” protests against a lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, and transgender (LGBT) pride event hosted by the US embassy on 26 June 2011... According to AFP, there were 100 protesters in Karachi, who called the event “an assault on Pakistan’s Islamic culture,” with demonstrations also occurring in Islamabad (30 protesters) and Lahore (150 students and two dozen pro-Taliban activists)... Dawn.com states that in Islamabad, in a “clash” with the protesters, ten members of the police received injuries, with two cases described as “serious”...

‘Jafria News reports that a statement issued a week after the US LGBT rights event by “All the Religious and Big Political Parties” group, which includes the Jafria Alliance Pakistan and the Shia Ulema Council, stated that “homosexuality was the extreme form of human degradation”... Pink News quotes the head of Jamaat-e-Islami, the largest Islamic party in the country, as saying that LGBT people are “the curse of society and social garbage”...

‘The Nation, an Islamabad-based newspaper, reports that Jamaat-e-Islami lawmakers referred the issue of the US-sponsored LGBT pride event to Parliament; the Senate “severely condemned” the event and “sent the matter to the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs for taking any possible action”...’ [12t]

21.25 The New York Times article, dated 3 November 2012, on LGBT activism in Lahore, stated that one 33-year-old female gay rights activist believed the US embassy’s gay

pride event was detrimental to Pakistan's gay community, saying "The damage that the U.S. pride event has done is colossal,... just in terms of creating an atmosphere of fear that was not there before. The public eye is not what we need right now".' **[115a]**

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Transgender persons

- 21.26 The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) Research Directorate stated in a response regarding the treatment of sexual minorities by society, government and religious authorities in Pakistan, dated 30 November 2011, that 'The BBC reports that an estimated 300,000 hijras live in Pakistan [and] ... an estimated 50,000 transgendered people in Pakistan... Cable News Network (CNN) reports that human rights groups in Pakistan say that approximately 400,000 men "live as women" in the country...' **[12t]**
- 21.27 Reuters India reported on 25 May 2010 that: 'Community leaders estimate the number of hijras in Pakistan at about 300,000.' **[10a]**

Legal rights

- 21.28 Dawn reported on 25 September 2012 that:

'The Supreme Court ruled... that according to the constitution trans-genders had equal rights as all citizens of Pakistan... A three-member bench headed by Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry heard the case pertaining to the rights of the trans-genders. The apex court ruled that the transgenders also have the right over family inheritance. Moreover, the court declared that no one can deprive them from their right to their inheritance. The apex court ordered that equal rights should be given to the eunuchs in all the fields of life including education and employment in a dignified manner. The Supreme Court directed the authorities to send copies of the court order to federal and provincial governments and also directed strict implementation of the order.' **[42e]**

- 21.29 The Aurat Foundation's 'Pakistan NGO Alternative Report on CEDAW [Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women] – 2005-2009 (With Updated Notes 2009-2012)', published November 2012, stated:

'A Supreme Court Order on 25 September 2012 in a petition affirmed the citizen's rights of transgender individuals specifically the Khawaja Sarra [transgender community]. It stated that "the rights, obligations including right to life and dignity [of the Khawaja Sarra] are equally protected ... The government functionaries both at federal and provincial levels are bound to provide them protection of life and property and secure their dignity as well, as is done in the case of other citizens." In addition to ordering the National Database and Registering Authority (NADRA) to register transgender individuals as the third sex, the Supreme Court ordered their registration as voters, affirmed their right to "due share" in moveable and immovable inherited property and criminalized the practice whereby parents abandon transgender children or hand them over to "gurus" who force them into beggary or prostitution for personal gain and asked provincial social welfare departments to work for their support and development.

'The Supreme Court judgment affirming their equal rights as citizen's is significant in that not only does it carry the promise of gender justice for the Khawaja Sarra, it tacitly

acknowledges the fluid nature of sexual identity and marks a break with the male/female binary. Prior to this ruling the Khawaja Sarra had exercised their right to vote and registration for National Identity Cards on the basis of an arbitrary determination of gender as male or female. Now they can vote and register as transgender individuals. In response to the judgment, state institutions such as NADRA have set up processes to facilitate their access to Computerized National Identity Cards as transgender individuals. Other signs of progress include the allocation of seven job positions in their offices across Pakistan by NADRA, the employment of Khawaja Sarra individuals to administer the polio vaccine by the Sindh Health Department and the use of their services for the recovery of dues by the Clifton Cantonment Board, Karachi.

‘Significant as first steps, these initiatives are clearly not enough to cater to the Khawaja Sara’s estimated population of around 800,000, nor has anything being [sic] done to facilitate their access to education and health services or to protect them from sexual exploitation and violence. At the same time social prejudice combined with poor implementation procedures are instrumental in denying Khawaja Sarra individuals their inheritance rights. As stated by one transgender individual, “the judiciary is listening and doing its bit, but we have yet to see the government come forward without the [Supreme Court] nudging it.” This is a matter of grave concern and the state needs to take systematic action to ensure the rights of transgender communities.’ **[57e] (p80-81, Major development after 2009)**

- 21.30 The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) consulted local experts on transgender and transexuals in Pakistan, including a journalist and producer from the private television station, Geo TV, who had made a documentary on the subject. Following this consultation, the FCO noted in a [letter](#) to the UK Border Agency (then the Border and Immigration Agency), dated 6 February 2008, with regard to Sharia law on transgender persons, that:

‘... the Sharia Law does not recognize any such [gender reassignment] operations and forbids them strictly. It is under this law that the various cases of gender operations have been arrested and charged in Paki[stan] courts. Depending on the severity [of transsexualism] various punishments have been prescribed in each case.

‘... Depending on the reasons [for undergoing a sex-change operation] that [the court] deduce, the transsexuals might be put in jail or prescribed lashes. In strict Sharia Law there can be worse punishments like stoning to death, but haven't been practiced by law yet. Stoning to death has been done in some rural areas where the local elders hold court to decide the matter... the constitution states that discrimination on basis of sex will not be entertained anywhere in the country. But it has failed to safeguard the rights of these people [transexuals] too.’ **[11f] (Paragraph 1)**

- 21.31 The same [letter](#) noted:

‘The crime of transsexualism or undergoing sex operations essentially is translated as tampering with the Almighty's creations. That is deemed as a crime... the understanding of the various angles and approaches of this issue/subject is limited to very few due to bans and taboos on the subject. This in turn then influences the perception and final judgment meted out to “criminals of sexual crime”.

‘There's no recorded history of such cases being tried in Sharia courts. Progressive and moderate interpretations of Islamic thought subscribe to this interpretation: “Religious law only makes exceptions when a doctor prescribes the operation for a grown adult

due to a severe and extremely dangerous health risk for the patient. Under religious law there should be absolutely no alternative for the patient and once the patient undergoes the operation, then s/he should be treated according to the new gender.” This is a quote from an Islamic scholar of the progressive school. His name is Khursheed Nadeem and he is the Country Director of an NGO called “Organization for Research and Education” in Islamabad. Classic and conventional Islamic interpretation prescribes to lashings and stonings - a practice that was prescribed for adultery in early Islam... stonings and lashings are carried out at the highest degree of sexual crime. So far a legal court in Pakistan has not ordered this punishment for any such criminal (...there are only a handful cases tried in courts). But when these cases are caught in rural areas, under feudal and tribal laws and customs, eunuchs and transsexuals are lashed in public. The reported incidence of this is few and far between because the transsexuals flee to areas where there [sic] communities are relatively more accepted.’ **[11f] (Paragraph 2)**

- 21.32 The letter further noted that if a transexual committed a crime the treatment given out by law would be the same as other offenders. **[11f] (Paragraph 9)**
- 21.33 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its report, State of Human Rights in 2011 (HRCP Report 2011), published March 2012, that ‘Women from sexual minorities – the hijra or transgendered community who mostly identify themselves as women – were granted the status of citizens of the State, but the only employment opportunity provided to them by the State was as tax collectors out to harass defaulters. This official gesture not only demeaned them as people and reinforced cultural biases of their nuisance value, but also set a precedent for how they were to be treated socially.’ **[27ij] (p157)**
- 21.34 However, regarding the ruling on trans-gender rights, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) noted, in a letter dated 9 November 2009, that ‘...the Court’s rulings in this case are essentially declaratory and have little binding effect on the government; declaring that the plaintiffs are Pakistani citizens and entitled to basic state provisions like education and the protection of law will not do anything to actually remove the disadvantages they [Hijras] face in society.’ **[11i]**
- 21.35 The International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) noted in its report Human Rights and Transgender People in Pakistan, published February 2008 (IGLHRC Report 2008), covering 2007 events, that, following an appeal to the Supreme Court:
- ‘... a landmark case involving transgender rights is currently unfolding in Pakistan. Nighat Saeed Khan, director of ASR [Applied Socia-Economic Research] Resource Centre in Lahore, Pakistan notes that, “Transgender individuals in Pakistan have typically faced a myriad of dangers from police, family, community, and religious authorities, and had to leave the country.” The current case challenges this status quo. It marks an attempt by a female-to-male transgender man and his wife to have their marriage recognized, an outcome that is predicated on the court’s recognition of the right to transgender identity... the case is precedent setting... because the issue of gender identity has been sent to the Supreme Court.’ **[49]**
- 21.36 An update dated 14 August 2007 on the website of Women Living under Muslim Laws, on the court case of a married couple where the husband had undergone partial sex-realignment treatment, observed that ‘Legally she [Shamial Raj, the husband] can live where she likes and two “women” can live together. They can also live together as they

are but need to be very quiet about this. If they are not married and if they are woman and man then society could have a problem.’ **[62]**

21.37 The same source continued:

‘Despite sensationalistic media reports, at no point have Shamial and Shahzina been charged or tried for “lesbianism” or for the legitimacy of their marriage. The law in Pakistan is silent on such relationships and defines no penalties. The question of Shamial's gender and sexuality only arose after the couple had engaged with the legal system in order to end the harassment by Shahzina's father, who had wanted to marry her off to settle a personal debt....Charges for section 377 of the PPC [Pakistan Penal Code], goes for trial. At no point have they been charged or tried for “lesbianism” and nor for their marriage... On the 28th of May [2007] the Court decided that there was insufficient evidence to charge Shahzina and Shamial under section 377 (unnatural offences) and while there were circumstances under which perjury was committed it would still give (a lesser) sentence on that charge. Yet they were given 3 years each.’ **[62]**

21.38 The couple were later released on bail, although consideration of the case by the courts as to whether the couple could remain married was delayed by the disruption to the judiciary as result of the State of the Emergency in November 2007 and the subsequent political turmoil in early 2008. (IGLHRC, February 2008) **[49]**

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Treatment by, and attitudes of, state authorities

21.39 Reporting on Pakistan’s national elections (held 11 May 2013), The Guardian stated on 9 May 2013 that, following a Supreme Court ruling in 2012, allowing transgender persons to register for national identity cards as a third gender rather than male or female, a small number of so-called ‘hijras’ were standing as candidates in the elections. **[113b]**

21.40 Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty reported on 10 May 2013 that ‘In past polls, the minority group was barred from voting because its members were not willing to classify themselves as men or women to receive official documentation.’ **[9b]**

21.41 The Guardian added:

‘The exact number of transgender candidates, all standing for provincial seats, is unclear. Almas Bobby, president of the Pakistan Shemale Foundation, an advocacy group, said she knew of at least five. Others say there are nearer 20.

‘The legal change has brought a new interest in the community from mainstream politicians. Lahore, Pakistan's second-biggest city and the capital of the province of Punjab, has long had a large transgender community. There, candidates from even the socially conservative Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, in power in the city for many years, are now courting the candidates and their voters.’ **[113b]**

- 21.42 However, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty observed that ‘In a blow to the community, more than 5,000 hijras in the restive northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province will not be able to cast their vote on May 11 due to the failure of the National Database Registration Authority to deliver computerized national identification cards to them.’ **[9b]**
- 21.43 The report continued:
- ‘Hijras have been traditionally exposed to extortion, sexual violence, and police misconduct. They have also been the target of violence by religious extremist groups in the country... Most hijras describe themselves as “professional wedding dancers,” but supporters say they are many times forced to earn income through begging and prostitution. Often dressed in bright-colored saris -- a traditional dress worn by women in the subcontinent -- and wearing heavy makeup, they roam the streets asking people for money, making them targets for police harassment, abuse, and even rape.
- ‘They also often show up uninvited at major family gatherings such as weddings and birthdays, singing and dancing until they are paid or given gifts, after which they depart. Hijras are often seen as a sign of good luck in such ceremonies, while the curse of an unappeased hijra provokes fear.’ **[9b]**
- 21.44 The HRCP noted in its report, the ‘State of Human Rights in 2012’, published March 2013, that ‘In November the Punjab government launched the Punjab Accelerated Literacy Promotion (PALP) programme which aimed at educating and providing technical skills to the population which was usually denied access to education, such as transgender persons, prisoners and child labourers.’ **[27b] (p227)**
- 21.45 The journalist and producer from GEO TV said that they had spoken to several transexuals who stated that when attempting to acquire new ID cards or travel documents they had been refused. The [letter](#) noted ‘...Officials at these offices demand health and operation records for [transexuals] but since the operation is illegal in Pakistan no doctor can issue a sex change certificate that supports the transsexuals’ claim. Public humiliation, aggravation and bureaucracy are part and parcel of this process.... NADRA [National Database and Registration Authority] does not appear to have a clear policy on this, as such applications are seen as exceptional cases.’ **[11f] (Paragraph 11)**
- 21.46 NDTV reported on 28 May 2010 on a court ruling allowing a man to undergo gender reassignment surgery. The report noted that doctors advised the man, diagnosed as having gender identity disorder, to seek permission for surgery from the court as no laws existed in Pakistan allowing for such an operation. **[147a]**
- 21.47 Dawn reported on 12 July 2011 that ‘The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government... devised a code for transvestites, performing in wedding parties and other festivities, to curtail incidents of their harassment.’ **[42a]**
- 21.48 The report noted that on 10 July 2011 ‘Some persons near Bakhsho area of Kazana police station reportedly abused and beaten [sic] up a group of transvestites besides shaving off their heads [sic]... after they performed in a wedding party. On Monday [11 July 2011], a number of transvestites under the banners of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Shemale Association staged a protest demonstration against the incident and demanded protection for their community.’ Provincial government spokesman, Mian Iftikhar Hussain, condemned the incident and said nine people had been arrested. He was reported as saying ‘Transvestites are human beings and they have equal rights as

men and women enjoy in our country. So we want to make it clear that providing protection to this segment is also responsibility of government and we will ensure it.' [42a]

- 21.49 Dawn added 'To avoid such type of incidents in future... the government in consultation with the representatives of transvestites decided that those wishing to take transvestites for performance in their parties would get their particulars registered at the police station concerned... Mr Hussain asked people not to tease transvestites. He said that the code would be implemented initially in the provincial capital but it could be replicated in other places, wherever such problems were reported.' [42a]
- 21.50 Reuters India reported on 25 May 2010 that police in Peshawar arrested an entire wedding party, including the bride and groom, at a ceremony between a man and a transgender person, stating they had '...registered a case against them for promoting homosexuality in the society.' However, the so-called groom claimed the party was for his birthday. The pair were remanded in custody for two weeks. [10a]

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Societal treatment and attitudes

- 21.51 The USSD Report 2012 stated that:

'Society generally shunned transgender, eunuchs, and hermaphrodites, referred to as "hijras," who often lived together in slum communities and survived by begging and dancing at carnivals and weddings. Some also were involved in prostitution. Hijras often were denied places in schools or admission to hospitals, and landlords often refused to rent or sell property to them. Hijras' families often denied them their fair share of inherited property. [See paragraph 21.28-29 for details of a Supreme Court ruling on transgender rights of inheritance]

'In November 2011 the Supreme Court ordered the national Election Commission to reach out to the hijra community and register its members to vote in advance of the March 2012 Senate elections.' [3n] (Section 6)

- 21.52 The FCO [letter](#) noted:

'Transgenders are called the "third form" or "hijras" in Urdu language. there [sic] are no apt words for hermaphrodites, transgenders, eunuchs, transsexuals, etc.. They are all lumped together under the word Hijra. Most people just ignore them, some revere them, give them alms and clothes, men generally ridicule them. The two biggest hurdles in their peaceful life is the sexual harassment from men, including thrashings in public and verbal abuse that they have to face from everyone. They learn to live on the periphery of society showing up to beg and dance on weddings and the birth of children in exchange for some money. Currently they have no place or industry to work in because they are harassed wherever they go. Education is an impossibility for them. If they adopt children and raise them, eventually they even leave them because of society's pressures.' [11f] (Paragraph 6)

- 21.53 The same [letter](#) stated ‘[that] men who behave, act, undergo operation[s], suffer with biological, psychological issues of gender are all termed as Hijras in Pakistan.’ The letter noted that instances of women undergoing an operation to become a man were very rare and that they would not be referred to as Hijras. **[11f] (Paragraph 7)**
- 21.54 The IRB Research Directorate noted in its response of 30 November 2012 that, according to the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) Country Adviser:
- ‘... zenanas are a sexual minority separate from hijras... He further states that the zenana “non-conformity to the biological construct is unacceptable” across all economic groups... However, those from lower economic groups “... generally around puberty leave or run away from their homes because the pressure of conforming to the biological construct starts increasing from the males of the household and most of the time takes a mentally and physically abusive turn”... Most zenanas, according to the Country Adviser, end up as sex workers on the street...
- ‘According to the Country Adviser, human rights abuses against zenanas include rape (including by police and “religious zealots”), police harassment, and policing by “religious zealots,” who may shave the head and eyebrows of a zenana, which is considered an insult... The Neengar Society representative also noted that, because they are visible, transgendered people face more problems with the police, such as arrests and sexual abuse...’ **[12t]**
- 21.55 The IRB added that:
- ‘A transgender individual interviewed by the BBC noted that people abuse them and tease them, and that it is hard to move about and find a place to live... According to the BBC article, even though they face discrimination in Pakistan, “transgenders have long been accepted as part of the fabric of Pakistani society”... The Neengar Society representative also noted that Pakistani society is tolerant of the transgender community because it has been “visible in this society for many centuries”...’ **[12t]**

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Assistance available to transgender persons

- 21.56 The Gender Interactive Alliance (GIA) Pakistan stated on its website, accessed 1 May 2013, that it was ‘... an organization working for the equality and civil rights of transgender people in Pakistan.’ The GIA stated that ‘Transgender persons do not have the same level of rights as other Pakistanis. They are also routinely harassed, face discrimination, and in some cases are subjected to violence simply for being transgender.’ **[8a] (About)**
- 21.57 The same source added:
- ‘Among our foremost projects is to lobby the government of Pakistan for: recognition of transgender people as equal citizens of Pakistan; providing free medical care to transgender people who are routinely denied public healthcare; and enabling entrepreneurship by providing economic opportunities for transgender people who are, by and large, left out of the mainstream economy. We also aim to provide a safe space for these people online so that their stories and experiences are not erased from our collective cultural experience.’ **[8a] (About)**

21.58 The GIA noted that it provided the following services under its Awareness Programme:

‘In-centre services:

- Provide basic education to transgender people regarding their health issues [sic].
- Provide awareness to transgender people about their basic rights.
- Provide information about job related matters to transgenders.
- Provide condom education and distribution
- Provide primary health-care curative services and services for stis [sexually transmitted infections] ... based on syndromic management using national guidelines
- Provide education on sexual health and STI’S (sexual transmitted infections), and access to acceptable and appropriate services for STI’S
- Provide access to voluntary counseling and testing services.’

‘Out-reach services:

- To visit the trans-gender people along road-sides, under the bridges, in public parks and play-grounds, around railway stations and bus stops and at their homes to:
- Tell them about the risk of HIV/AIDS,STI’S
- Educate them about safe sex so that they may be aware of the spread of HIV/AIDS through sexual activity including proper usage of condoms.
- Guiding them on available alternative means of employment
- Providing them access to basic education.’ **[8b] (Awareness programme)**

21.59 Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) reported on 8 June 2010 that the Shemale Rights Foundation, based in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, was a new group, the first of its kind in the region, aimed at ‘... representing Pakistani transvestites, transsexuals, and eunuchs...’ and was ‘... demanding greater rights protection for the community...’ The article quoted newly elected chairperson, Farzana, who said “‘There is a long history of discrimination against us. We are a laughing-stock for people and they make fun of us. Police officials most often forcefully arrest our community members and take them to the police station... They arrest us for nothing and there is no one to speak for us. Now we ourselves will fight for our rights”.’ **[9a]**

21.60 RFE/RL noted that ‘No reliable data exist, but Farzana said an estimated 10,000 hijras live in the region. Last week, hijras protested in Peshawar about what they called the heavy-handedness of police.’ **[9a]**

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22. Disability

22.01 The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, stated that:

‘The law provides for equality of the rights of persons with disabilities, but the provisions were not always implemented in practice. After dissolution of the former Ministry of Social Welfare and Special Education in April 2011, its affiliated departments, including

the Directorate General for Special Education, National Council for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled, and National Trust for the Disabled, were handed over to the Capital Administration and Development Division. The special education and social welfare offices were devolved to the provinces and are responsible for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities.

‘In the provinces social welfare departments worked for the welfare and education of persons with disabilities. In Sindh the minister for bonded labor and special education is mandated to address the educational needs of persons with disabilities. At the higher-education level, special departments provided special education at Allama Iqbal Open University, the University of the Punjab, and Karachi University. According to the Leonard Cheshire Foundation, most children with disabilities did not attend school; at the primary level specifically, the percentages for those out of school were 50 percent for girls and 28 percent for boys.

‘The government declared the federal capital and provincial capitals as disabled-friendly cities and granted permission to persons with disabilities to take central superior service exams. It also established 127 special education centers in main cities. Employment quotas at the federal and provincial levels require public and private organizations to reserve at least 2 percent of jobs for qualified persons with disabilities. In practice, this right was protected only partially due to a lack of adequate enforcement mechanisms. Families cared for most individuals with physical and mental disabilities. In some cases criminals forced persons with disabilities into begging and took most of the proceeds they received.

‘Organizations that refused to hire persons with disabilities could choose to pay a fine to a disability assistance fund. This obligation was rarely enforced. The National Council for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled provided job placement and loan facilities as well as subsistence funding. There were no restrictions on the rights of persons with disabilities to vote or participate in civil affairs. However, voting was challenging for persons with disabilities because of severe difficulties in obtaining transportation and access to polling stations.’ **[3n] (Section 6)**

22.02 Pakistan ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 6 June 2011. On signing, President Zardari said:

‘... the Directorate General of Special Education has also taken various initiatives for the welfare of special people. Establishment of Special Education Departments at Allama Iqbal Open University, University of the Punjab and Karachi University, a bill on provision in building codes to give accessibility to special people, construction of Special Education Buildings in main cities, declaring federal capital and provincial headquarters as disabled friendly cities, permission to special persons to appear in CSS exams and establishment of 127 Special Education Centres in main cities were among those initiatives...’ (Daily Times, 7 June 2011) **[55h]**

22.03 On 13 August 2012, the UN General Assembly published a summarised ‘Compilation [of reports] prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/2 – Pakistan’ for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated:

‘CRC [Committee on the Rights of the Child] was concerned about the very limited basic services supporting children with disabilities and at their limited access to education,

health, social services, social events and cultural activities. It was also concerned at the lack of adequate infrastructure for them and at the low level of support received by these children and their families.

‘UNCT [United Nations Country Team] noted that there remains a considerable attitudinal and behavioural form of exclusion of persons with disabilities. Significant steps are required in terms of shifting the charity-oriented approach towards those persons.’ **[83c] (paragraphs 66-67)**

22.04 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its report, the ‘State of Human Rights in 2012’, published March 2013, that:

‘Children with disabilities were also a largely ignored segment of the population in the country in 2012, with the exception of a few sporadic measures during the course of the year. Pakistan Baitul Mal provided 90,000 wheelchairs, 20,000 white canes, 30,000 hearing aids as well as uniforms for children of the four Special Education Centres in Islamabad working under the Directorate General of Special Education and Social Welfare, Ministry of Capital Administration and Development. In October, the Secretary Capital Administration and Development (CAD) announced the establishment of special desks in all government hospitals to provide free medical treatment to persons with disabilities on priority. In December, the Federal Minister for Capital Administration and Development also announced government plans to establish a degree college for persons with disabilities. At the provincial level, the Punjab chief minister ordered the Punjab Education Endowment Fund to provide scholarships to special children, adding that vouchers should also be given to deserving disabled children for free education under the education voucher scheme of the Punjab Education Foundation. He said that the provincial government would formulate a comprehensive policy to provide education and impart skills trainings to special children. Six projects were approved for the Sindh Special Education Department under the Annual Development Program 2012-2013. The projects dealt with raising awareness on disabilities, training of teachers and upgrading of existing educational facilities.’ **[27b] (p191-192)**

22.05 A paper entitled ‘Services and Facilities Available to Children with Disabilities in Special Schools of Karachi Region’, dated May 2012, by Dr Shaista Naz of Sindh Madrasa-tul-Islam University, Karachi, and Dr Nasir Sulman of the University of Karachi, published by the Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business, noted:

‘After the 18th amendment in the constitution of Pakistan, there are twelve special education institutions devolved in Sindh province, which were previously run by federal government. Now, there are 48 institutions working actively in the province which are providing the following facilities: Justified and transparent provision of facilities to the students of its special education centers/ schools/ institutes including uniform; free pick and drop facility; nutrition; school bags, books, pencils, reading / learning material at free of cost; provision of voice hearing aids / equipment; wheel chair for persons with physical handicapped [sic]; and white can[e] for children with blindness. Finally, provide stipend to the staff who [are] working on [a] voluntary basis in 19 special education centers in the Sindh province.

‘In the Sindh province, Persons with disabilities face numerous challenges that result in their exclusion from the mainstream of society, making it difficult for them to access their fundamental social, political and economic rights. Many make their way through life impoverished, abandoned, uneducated, malnourished, discriminated against, neglected and vulnerable. For them, life is a daily struggle to survive. Whether they live in urban

centers or in rural areas, they share these common problems. They are largely excluded from essential services and they lack the protection of the family and community, and are often at risk of exploitation and abuse. The factors contributing to this pathetic situation are many and varied but include poverty, unemployment, and social isolation, environmental, institutional, attitudinal, and economic barriers.’ **[145a] (1.2 Provision of Special Education)**

- 22.06 The paper noted that, of the 60 surveyed schools, only three (five per cent) provided inclusive education (3.2 Philosophical basis of special schools) and only 12 organisations (20 per cent) provided a wheelchair ramp for accessibility. (3.8 Availability of Physical Facilities) Physical disabilities were catered for in eight (13 per cent) of the schools. **[145a] (Table 4)**

See also Children: [Education](#) and [Health and welfare](#)

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23. Women

Overview

- 23.01 The Foreign and Commonwealth Office observed in its 2012 Human Rights and Democracy Report (FCO Report 2012), published 15 April 2013, that ‘There have been a number of federal legislative successes over the last two years on women’s rights. These have been particularly aimed at protecting women from violence, including acid attacks. In 2012, however, Pakistan fell to 134th out of 135 countries in the World Economic Forum’s Gender Gap Index, scoring particularly low in education, economic participation and health.’ **[11e] (Women’s rights)**
- 23.02 Pakistan is a signatory to the UN Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). (UN Treaty Collection, accessed 4 June 2013) **[79d]**
- 23.03 The ‘Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Pakistan’ by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, dated 1 March 2013, welcomed the adoption of laws aimed at eliminating discrimination against women, including: The Criminal Law Act (Second Amendment, 2011), referred to as the Acid control and Acid Crime Prevention; The Criminal Law Act (Third Amendment, 2011), referred to as Prevention of Anti-Women Practices; and The Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010. **[79g] (paragraph 4)**
- 23.04 On 13 August 2012, the UN General Assembly published a summarised ‘Compilation [of reports] prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/2 – Pakistan’ for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated ‘The High Commissioner for Human Rights noted the National Assembly had adopted a number of important new laws designed to protect women and girls from violence, but recommended that effective monitoring and reporting mechanisms be put in place as the overall picture of women’s rights in Pakistan, especially in rural areas, remains grim.’ **[83c] (paragraph 19)**

23.05 The Asian Human Rights Commission, commenting on the speech made by Pakistan's foreign minister, Ms. Rabbani Khar, at the UPR, stated on 4 November 2012 that, despite the passing of laws to protect women, the Pakistan government had failed to enforce these legislations. **[52m]**

23.06 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan stated in its report, the State of Human Rights in 2011 (HRCP Report 2011), published March 2012, that:

'While gender constitutes one of the factors that makes people socially vulnerable and discriminated against, the issues of women have to be calibrated against a number of variables. Not all women suffer social vulnerability in quite the same manner or extent and their situation may differ in accordance with their social positioning in terms of class, religion, education, economic independence, geographical location – inclusive of distance from urban centres – caste, educational profile, marital status, number of children and so on.

'So, while all women continue to do poorly in terms of their status as citizens of the State, a fact reflected in the poorer statistics for women's education and health, for instance, and discriminatory laws that make them socially vulnerable, their vulnerability is experientially different according to their social position and their access to avenues of empowerment.

'Over the year 2011, the social indices of development such as educational opportunities, employment, and health pertaining to women remained dismal with 65 percent of the workforce engaged in low paid and unrepresented homebased work. The floods continued to affect women and children adversely, with 120,000 pregnant women suffering from trauma, fatigue, malnutrition, and poor hygiene. The health indicators for women, particularly in rural areas, remained abysmal, with breast cancer being amongst the highest in South Asia and 40,000 deaths recorded annually. In urban centres, drug addiction amongst women with school and college degrees was recorded, and the percentage of attempted suicides by ingesting poison, the most discrete form of suicide rose, with up to five to six cases of teenage suicide attempts coming in daily in Karachi alone.' **[27g] (p155-156)**

23.07 Minority Rights Group International noted in its report State of the World's Minorities and Indigenous Peoples 2012, published 28 June 2012, that 'Women in tribal areas of north-west Pakistan are particularly threatened by the Taliban. The Taliban continue to oppose education for girls, setting back education targets for minority women in areas where the Taliban hold sway. Maryum Bibi, an official with Peshawar-based NGO Khwendo Kor, told media that women remain fearful: "Despite the official stance that the Taliban have been defeated, they remain present in remote areas".' **[88e] (p141)**

See also Children: [Education](#) and [Militant attacks on schools](#)

23.08 In its 'Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Pakistan' dated 1 March 2013, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women noted the devolution of powers to the provinces under the 18th Constitutional amendment, which included all matters relating to the development of women, and expressed concern about:

'... the governance challenges embodied in the devolution of powers, including the integration and coordination of policies' aimed at the advancement of women from the national to the provincial level. It is further concerned that the State party lacks the

capacity to put in place an efficient mechanism to ensure that the provincial governments establish legal and other measures to fully implement the Convention [CEDAW] in a coherent and consistent manner. It is further concerned that the different levels of authority and competence within the State party due to the devolution of powers may result in a differentiated application of the law.’ **[79g] (paragraph 11)**

- 23.09 The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women raised a number of concerns about Pakistan’s incorporation of the Convention in national legislation, including:

‘... the absence of a prohibition of all forms of discrimination against women, in line with article 1 of the Convention and about the persistence of discriminatory provisions against women in a number of laws, such as, the Qanoon-e-Shahadat Order 1984 (Law of Evidence), the Hudood Ordinances (1979) and the Citizenship Act (1951). It is concerned at the delay and the lack of a clear timeframe for the adoption of a number of important bills, such as the Domestic Violence (Criminal Law amendment) Bill and the Prevention and Control of Women Trafficking Bill as well as about the poor implementation of laws aimed at the elimination of discrimination against women. The Committee is also concerned that the jurisdiction of the highest courts in the Constitution does not apply to the whole territory of the State party, hence women could be deprived of their constitutional rights, as well as about the ambiguity caused by the recognition in the Constitution of the Federal Shariat Court. It is also concerned at the lack of awareness by the judiciary of women’s rights and relevant domestic legislation. It is further concerned at the existence of parallel justice systems (jirgas and panchayats), despite the ruling against their legality and of different informal dispute resolution mechanisms (Musaliyat Anjuman), which discriminate against women.’ **[79g] (paragraph 15)**

- 23.10 The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child noted in its concluding observations to Pakistan’s report regarding the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), dated 19 October 2009, that:

‘The Committee remains extremely concerned at the evidence of serious discrimination against women and girls in the State party, as attested by the acute gender differentials in infant mortality rates and school enrolment rates and the continuing existence of early marriages and exchanges of girls for debt settlement, domestic violence affecting women and girls, and other such situations including bonded labour and economic exploitation of girls... there seems to be little or no improvement in the country.’ **[79c] (paragraph 28)**

See also [Children](#)

- 23.11 Minority Rights Group International noted in its report State of the World’s Minorities and Indigenous Peoples 2011, published 6 July 2011, discussing the day-to-day discrimination and marginalisation of minorities in Pakistan, particularly with regards to minority women, that:

‘... this is compounded by the discrimination that they experience as women, and may also be compounded by caste-based discrimination. A recent survey reported by the AHRC [Asian Human Rights Commission] found that primary school enrolment rates for girls belonging to scheduled Hindu castes in Pakistan were just 10.2 per cent; the national female primary enrolment rate was given as 48 per cent. Overall, 87 per cent of women from scheduled Hindu castes were illiterate, compared to 58 per cent of women

nationally. This indicates a huge discrepancy in regard to access to education between this minority group and the Muslim majority. The AHRC also reports that religious minority women have limited employment options, and are most often found in low-status work, such as manual scavenging or cleaning in urban areas, or subsistence or bonded agricultural labour in rural areas. Gender discrimination and patriarchal norms within their own communities mean that few women within minority communities are able to retain control over income that they bring into the family.' **[88d] (p148)**

See also Freedom of religion: [Hindus and Sikhs](#)

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Legal rights

- 23.12 The Pakistan constitution states that 'All citizens are equal before [the] law and are entitled to equal protection of law...There shall be no discrimination on the basis of sex alone...Nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from making any special provision for the protection of women and children.' **[29n] (Part II, Chapter 1, Section 25)**
- 23.13 The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, observed that 'The law prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, but authorities did not enforce this provision. Women faced discrimination in family law, property law, and the judicial system.' **[3n] (Section 6)**
- 23.14 On 13 August 2012, the UN General Assembly published a summarised 'Compilation [of reports] prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/2 – Pakistan' for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated:
- 'In May 2012, the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers paid particular attention to the integration of a gender perspective and women's rights at all levels of the justice system. She noted that many stages of the justice system, starting with filing a case with the police, to accessing lawyers, and appearing and testifying before courts, were gender-biased, and therefore impeded the full functioning of justice for women. She also encouraged further strengthening of special trainings on human rights law, including training on gender equality and women's rights.' **[83c] (paragraph 36)**
- 23.15 The HRCP Report 2010 noted 'While declarations of commitment to empowerment of women abounded, the task remained unfulfilled because of absence of concrete measures. After taking the first steps in the right direction, the government seemed to lack the ability to follow through. Some pro-woman legal provisions also faced reversal.' **[27e] (p202)**
- 23.16 The Express Tribune reported on 3 February 2012 that the Senate unanimously passed the National Commission for Status of Women, 2012, bill. The report noted that bill would allow the Commission to:
- 'Assess implementation and make suitable recommendations to concerned authorities considered necessary for effective impact;
 - Review all laws, rules and regulations affecting the status and rights of women;

- Suggest repeal, amendment or new legislation essential to eliminate discrimination;
- Sponsor, steer and encourage research to generate information;
- Conduct dialogue with non-governmental organisations, experts and individuals in society;
- Help facilitate and monitor implementation of international instruments and obligations affecting adult and minor females to which Pakistan is a signatory.’ **[92a]**

23.17 The Express Tribune also reported, on 12 December 2011, on the passing of the Prevention of Anti-Women Practices (Criminal Law Amendment) Bill 2008. The Bill’s aims included:

- ‘Forcing a woman into marriage for settling a dispute to be a non- bailable offence;
- Bartering a woman in such a way to be punishable by three to five years jail and a fine of Rs0.5 million;
- Depriving a woman of her inheritance can lead to imprisonment of between five and 10 years or a fine of Rs1 million or both;
- Forced marriages (other than those for settling disputes) to be punishable by between three and 10 years jail and a fine of Rs0.5 million;
- Forcing a woman to “marry” the Holy Quran to result in a jail term of three to seven years and a fine of Rs0.5 million.’ **[92e]**

23.18 Amnesty International stated in its report ‘As If Hell Fell On Me’: The Human Rights Crisis in Northwest Pakistan, published 10 June 2010, that ‘The reliance on jirgas under the FCR [Frontier Crimes Regulation] in practice discriminates against women by providing them no access to the tribal councils that in the case of many disputes may decide their fate and whose procedures include few or no rights or protections for those affected.’ **[13e] (p28)**

See also Judiciary: [Frontier Crimes Regulation \(FCR\)](#)

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Women’s Protection Act

23.19 On 1 December 2006 President Musharraf signed into law the Women’s Protection Act (WPA). (USSD IRF Report 2008) **[3m] (Section II)** The US Department of State July-December, 2010 International Religious Freedom Report (USSD IRF Report 2010), published 13 September 2011, stated ‘Until the passage of the 2006 Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act (WPA), cases of rape and adultery were also heard under the Hudood Ordinance, which led to numerous abuses against women. The 2006 law moved these cases to secular rather than Sharia courts; thousands of women have now been released from jail, although social ostracism continued in some cases.’ **[3I] (Section II)**

23.20 A Response to Information Request (RIR) by the IRB dated 3 December 2007 noted that the WPA ‘...also prohibits charging women with fornication offences in the cases

where women allege they were victims of rape but cannot prove their “absence of consent”... Heterosexual consensual sex outside of marriage continues to be criminalized; however, the Act provides that such complaints will be investigated by a court before formal charges are laid...’ **[12f]**

23.21 The USSD Report 2012 noted, on the WPA, that:

‘As in previous years, the government’s enforcement of the Women’s Protection Act of 2006 was poor. The act brought the crime of rape under the jurisdiction of criminal rather than Islamic courts. In cases of rape, by law police are not allowed to arrest or hold a woman overnight at a police station without a civil court judge’s consent. The law requires a complaint to be made directly to a sessions court, a trial court for heinous offences. After recording the victim’s statement, the sessions court judge officially lodges a complaint, after which police can then make arrests. While this procedure was meant to eliminate abuses relating to social norms that make it difficult for women to seek legal redress with police, NGOs reported that it created other barriers for rape victims who could not afford to travel to the courts or access the courts. Rape continued to be a severely underreported crime due to societal taboos that prevented persons from speaking about it.’ **[3n] (Section 6)**

See also subsection: [Rape](#)

23.22 The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child report, dated 19 March 2009, stated that:

‘Amendments have been made in the Hudood [Hudood] Ordinance through the Prevention of Anti-Women Practices (Criminal Law) Amendment Act, 2006. The new law has been designed to end practices such as preventing or obstructing women to get their share in inheritance, sale of woman, forced marriage, Nikah [Islamic wedding ceremony] with the Holy Quran, custom of “Vani” or giving a woman in marriage to settle a feud and pronouncement of divorce three times. These inhuman practices have been made offences under the Pakistan Penal Code.’ **[79b] (paragraph 32)**

See also Children: [Underage/forced marriage](#)

23.23 The HRCP Report 2010 cited:

‘In a setback to efforts to ensure equal protection of law for women, the Federal Shariat Court ruled that sections 11, 28 and 29 of the Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act of 2006 were unconstitutional, on the contention that these provisions negated the over-riding effect of the Hudood Ordinance of 1979. HRCP expressed alarm that the FSC verdict not only sought reversion to provisions of the 1979 Hudood Ordinance, which were highly discriminatory to the rights of women, but also undermined the legislative authority of parliament in encroaching upon its power to translate people’s demands into laws, and subverted the functioning and authority of the mainstream judiciary. The government and the civil society were urged to challenge the FSC decision to ensure that women’s rights were not compromised.

‘The National Commission on the Status of Women (NCWS) also opposed the verdict, arguing that it only resuscitated the injustices against women that they had fought to eradicate. The NCWS called upon the government to strongly oppose the judgement as it could not only take the nation back to square one, but also exploited religion for political gains.’ **[27e] (p203)**

23.24 Regarding the FSC's verdict, the HRC Report 2011 noted that 'In 2011, there was widespread protest by women and civil rights groups over this backsliding... They opposed the FSC's aim to trivialise the rights of women through legitimising discrimination against them. The FSC decision was also challenged and an appeal made to the Supreme Court (the Federal Shariat Appellate Bench) by a number of women's rights organizations. The appeal was still pending at the end of 2011.' **[27g] (p158-159)**

See also Sections Judiciary: [Shariat courts \(Islamic law\)](#) and [Hudood Ordinances](#), Freedom of Religion: [Hudood Ordinances](#) and Children: [Childcare and protection](#)

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Political rights

23.25 Shirkat Gah – Women's Resource Centre, Pakistan, made a 'Stakeholders Joint Submission for Pakistan's Review in The Human Rights Council -14th Session, October 2012' (Shirkat Gah Stakeholders Joint Submission), undated, accessed 8 May 2012, in which it stated:

'The current representation of women in National Parliament and Provincial Legislatures is ensured with 17% seats reserved for women. Women occupy 22.2 % seats in the National Assembly, 17% in the Senate of Pakistan and 126 out of 728 seats (17.6%) in the Provincial Assemblies...

'Data indicates that women on reserved seats are among the most active in the Provincial and National Assemblies and in the Senate. Of the 69 private member bills that were introduced in 2008-09, 51 were introduced by women on reserved seats, out of which 9 directly related to women. Similarly, in 2010-11, the majority of the bills were introduced by women on reserved seats. These women challenged social and cultural norms and introduced bills against domestic violence, women trafficking, discriminatory practices against women, and bills pertaining to women's reproductive rights. Women legislators have not restricted themselves to addressing women's issues only; they have also introduced amendments pertaining to a broad range of issues from citizenship to Anti-terrorism.' **[132a] (p2)**

23.26 The Report of the Commonwealth Observer Mission on the Pakistan General Elections, 11 May 2013, published 20 June 2013, noted, with regards to the participation and representation of women in the elections, that:

'The level of representation of women as candidates remains relatively low. For instance, while there are 60 reserved seats for women in the 342-seat National Assembly, women represented just over 3% of the total number of candidates contesting the general seats for the Assembly¹⁸. The level of women as registered voters also remains relatively low and despite some improvements in the number of women on the voter register and some positive initiatives by the ECP there remains, according to ECP data, a shortfall of over 10 million women compared to men on the Electoral Rolls.' **[70a] (p27)**

23.27 In its 'Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Pakistan', dated 1 March 2013, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women reiterated its concern at:

‘... the low level of participation of women in political and public life, especially in decision-making positions and in the local administration, as well as in the diplomatic service. It is concerned that women have only 17% of reserved seats in the National Assembly, Provincial Assemblies and the Senate. It is further concerned that patriarchal attitudes and rooted stereotypes on the roles of women and men in society result in the forced disenfranchisement of women and impede and discourage their participation in elections (as candidates and voters). It reiterates its concern at the low participation of women in the judiciary in the Superior Courts and the total absence of women judges in the Supreme Court...’ **[79g] (paragraph 25)**

- 23.28 The HRCP Report 2012 stated, with regards to women judges, that ‘There was not a single woman judge among the 17 judges of the Supreme Court in 2012. A woman has never been elevated to the apex court in the country’s history. Of the five high courts, there were only three women judges out of a total of 103 high court judges. Two of the women high court judges were appointed in 2012.’ **[27b] (p166-167)**

See also [Judiciary](#)

- 23.29 The USSD Report 2012 noted that:

‘No laws prevent women from voting; however, cultural and traditional barriers in tribal and rural areas impeded some women. There are 60 seats in the National Assembly reserved for women. The reserved seats were apportioned on the basis of total votes secured by the candidates of each political party contesting elections to the general seats. Of the 758 seats in provincial assemblies, 128 were reserved for women. One-third of the seats in local councils were reserved for women. In some districts social and religious conservatives prevented women from becoming candidates. Women also participated actively as political party members but were not always successful in securing leadership positions within parties, with the exception of the women’s wing. There are women serving as federal ministers, including Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar and Farzana Raja, chairperson of Benazir Income Support Program. A woman, Fehmida Mirza, served as the Speaker of the National Assembly.

‘In the March by-election in Mianwali, Punjab, a jirga was held in which local leaders decided to bar women from voting.’ **[3n] (Section 3)**

- 23.30 The Asian Human Rights Commission noted in its report, The State of Human Rights in Pakistan – 2008 (AHRC Report 2008), published 11 December 2008, that the women in the National Assembly ‘...are not directly elected, they are merely placed into the positions by their party, which limits their value as political figures. Critics complain of nepotism.’ **[52b] (p10)**
- 23.31 The HRCP Report 2010 noted ‘Some women parliamentarians complained of lack of attention to the issues raised by them as well as the general attitudes towards women voters and politicians. They said women’s presence in parliament would produce a change only if their voices were heard.’ **[27e] (p206)**
- 23.32 The International Federation for Human Rights (FiDH) reported on 3 November 2010 that it welcomed ‘...election of its Vice-president, Ms Asma Jahangir, as president of Pakistan’s Supreme Court Bar Association. She is now the first woman to lead the most prestigious association of the legal community in Pakistan... The election of Asma Jahangir to the Supreme Court Bar Association constitutes an important step not only

for the defence of the independence of the judiciary but also for the defense of human rights in general in Pakistan.’ **[24a]**

23.33 The HRCP Report 2009 stated that ‘In 2009, the abolition of the local government system of 2001 came as a setback to women’s participation in the political process. The system, for the first time in the history of the country, had given women 33 per cent representation at the local level and provided them an opportunity to participate in decision-making. At many places, women councillors had played an active role in addressing women’s complaints and providing relief to women victims.’ **[27c] (p187)**

23.34 The Shirkat Gah Stakeholders Joint Submission recommended ‘Increasing women’s reserved seats in Parliament and Provincial Assemblies to 33%, and restoring the local government system with 33% women’s reserved seats [to] ensure women’s increased and effective contribution on all matters pertaining to citizenry.’ **[132a] (p2)**

23.35 On the oppression of women participating in public life in Pakistan, the ACHR South Asia Human Rights Index 2008 recorded that:

‘Chief Minister of Sindh Dr. Arbab Ghulam Rahim stated during the launch of the election campaign for his party on 26 August 2007 in Thatta that women’s leadership was a “curse” on society.

‘On 29 March 2007, tribal elders in Bannu district of North West Frontier Province barred women from casting their vote in the by-election of National Assembly Seat-26.

‘Most women councillors of Upper Dir district in NWFP have not attended sessions of district and union councils since 2005 because of an “unofficial ban” imposed by a local jirga. Unelected male relatives had represented them since 2005, in sessions of the district and union councils. These self-nominated “representatives” of women councillors – apparently fathers, sons, brothers and husbands – enter councils’ rooms, sign the attendance roster and take part in the debate on behalf of the women councilors with complete acquiescence of the state.’ **[67b] (p75)**

23.36 The HRCP Report 2011 stated ‘In November, in a by-election for a provincial assembly constituency of Kohistan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, only men participated in the voting. Media reports said that a jirga held ahead of the polling day had decided not to allow women voters to turn up at polling stations, calling their participation against tribal tradition.’ **[27g] (p144)**

23.37 The HRCP Report 2009 noted:

‘A Senate Committee in Islamabad expressed concern over the restrictions imposed on women’s participation in the Feb 18, 2008 elections in certain areas of the NWFP, FATA [Federally Administered Tribal Areas], Punjab and Sindh and criticized local leaders for having agreed to the violation of election rules and women’s rights. It also criticized the local political leaders for being a party to the undemocratic move to prohibit women from exercising their right to vote. It directed the Ministry of Law and Justice to suggest measures to encourage women’s participation in elections... In the 2008 elections, the civil society organisations had raised concern at significant difference between the number of men and women registered as voters. Out of a total of 80.4 million voters, over 45 million were men, and over 35 million were women. According to non-official estimates, nearly 14 million eligible women were not registered as voters. While the local body elections are likely to be held in 2010, the Election Commission made no effort to remove this discrepancy.’ **[27c] (p187)**

Social and economic rights

23.38 In its 'Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Pakistan', dated 1 March 2013, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women expressed concern at '... the persistence of patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted stereotypes concerning women's roles and responsibilities that discriminate against them and perpetuate their subordination within the family and society, all of which have recently been exacerbated by the influence of non-State actors in the State party.' **[79g] (paragraph 21)**

23.39 The HRC Report 2011 noted that:

'Over the year 2011, the social indices of development such as educational opportunities, employment, and health pertaining to women remained dismal with 65 percent of the workforce engaged in low paid and unrepresented homebased work...' **(p156)** 'Women enter the workforce with several disadvantages. Lack of education and limited exposure to the public sphere leads to diminished employment opportunities for women and a poor sense of self worth. Women thereby tend to be employed in the worst-paid and most exploitative occupations.' **[27g] (p161)**

23.40 The same source added:

'The education indicators for women suffered from cultural practices and in some strife-riddled parts of the country particularly in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where girls' schools were targeted by the militants, leading to prolonged closures. Meanwhile, in urban centres, a number of cases of sexual harassment came to view in institutions of higher education and perpetrators were brought to book in accordance with the new laws.' **[27g] (p156)**

See also subsection [Women in the workplace](#), [Violence against women and Children: Education](#)

23.41 The HRC Report 2009 stated:

'Women were very hopeful of positive developments after the induction of the democratic government, particularly with regard to the enunciation of a national employment policy for women and women's participation in the economy. The new government had also promised legislation to enable women to have legal ownership of assets and resources and institutional initiatives to prevent crimes against women in the name of tribal traditions. However, the government failed to deliver on its promises.

'The religio-political groups remained vehemently opposed to bringing women into the mainstream. In February the women's wing of Jamaat-e-Islami strongly criticized the decision by the Senate Standing Committee on Women's Welfare to allocate 50 percent job quota for women, terming it highly dangerous and destructive for the family system and values.' **[27c] (p188)**

23.42 The Asian Human Rights Commission stated in its report *The State of Human Rights in Pakistan – 2009* (AHR Report 2009), published July 2010, that:

'As an explicitly Muslim state, the women of Pakistan are beholden to a number of Islamic principles. For one, the family is seen as the nucleus of society, the fundamental building block from which the rest of society emerges and evolves. Women are seen to

be responsible for maintaining the sanctity of the family, and are thus those who are most likely to disrupt this sanctity. As such, the woman becomes the lynch pin of an ordered society; it is on her back that responsibility and power lies, both for her family and by extension, for all of society. While the violence against women enacted in this society occurs for manifold reasons, it seems that this understanding of women as both the lynch pin and the one with the power to unravel society, is a contributing factor to the continual mistreatment of women in Pakistan.’ **[52a] (p201)**

See also [Violence against women](#)

23.43 The HRCP Report 2009 noted that the:

‘Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) was formally launched in February in Balochistan with the promise that the incumbent government would empower women financially and reduce poverty in the country. The programme was aimed at emancipating women from economic constraints and enabling them to stand on their own feet as they were better qualified to provide education to their children. Under the BISP, each form holder would receive Rs [Rupees]. 2,000 after every two months and the government will initiate technical and computer education training for children of women in need. The government would also provide soft loans to women in order to enable them to strengthen home economies.’ **[27c] (p188)**

23.44 Amnesty International noted in its report ‘As If Hell Fell On Me’: The Human Rights Crisis in Northwest Pakistan, published 10 June 2010, that:

‘The Pakistani Taleban systematically imposed restrictions on women’s activities, their movement or employment outside the home. The Taleban’s systematic discrimination against women was notable even by the standards of conservative religiosity practiced in FATA and NWFP. Dozens of people, men and women, from different FATA Agencies complained to Amnesty International that the new rules imposed on women and girls by the Taleban were a primary reason for their fleeing their homes.

‘In Khyber Agency, in November 2008, the Taleban threatened local women who were going to the offices of NADRA (the National Database and Registration Authority, which provides new registration for Pakistanis), as it was registering women for the Benazir Income Support Program. Taleban forces were apparently angry that the office took photographs of women beneficiaries for identification and registration. One man told Amnesty International: “There were no women at the NADRA office to take photograph of the local women for the registration cards. All the other staff was male. And this is why the militants, and also the local tribesmen, opposed the women’s [sic] visiting the NADRA office... Posters were pasted on walls in Landi Kotal warning people not to send women to the NADRA office. The handwritten posters said the practice of taking photographs of women is un-Islamic and males should not allow their women to visit the NADRA offices. The writings warned that they would take action if someone defied the orders.”

‘The Taleban’s efforts to bar women from registering for new national identification cards meant that they were essentially outside the government’s official records — an omission that created significant problems later when many women fled conflict-affected areas but could not register to receive government relief services, including food, shelter and medical assistance because they lacked the requisite documents...’ **[13e] (p41)**

See also Sections: Security situation: [Pakistani Taliban](#), and [Citizenship and Nationality](#)

23.45 In its 'Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Pakistan', dated 1 March 2013, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women were concerned about:

'... the prevalence of customs and traditional practices, which limit the degree of involvement of rural women in development programmes and prevent them from inheriting or acquiring land and other property. It is concerned that rural women farmers are not recognized as such, because in the State party a farmer (kisan) is the person who owns land. It is also concerned at the difficulties faced by rural women in accessing health and social services and to participate in decision-making processes at the community level.' **[79g] (paragraph 33)**

23.46 The AHRC Report 2008 recorded that 'Middle-class women generally have more social and economic freedom in Pakistan, but in rural and tribal areas an estimated 12.5 million women are still denied the right to vote. Many have little or no independence on any level. The advances at the top need to be taken into the villages and onto the street and practically enforced. Businesses and local authorities such as the police and judiciary remain profoundly male oriented.' **[52b] (p10)**

See also subsection [Political rights](#)

Family laws: marriage, divorce and inheritance

23.47 The Muslim Family Laws Ordinance, 1961, stated that 'It extends to [the] whole of Pakistan, and applies to all Muslim citizens of Pakistan, wherever they may be.' The ordinance covers marriage, polygamy, divorce and maintenance. **[30]** The Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act 1939 lays down the grounds on which a woman may divorce her husband. **[31]** The Offence of Zina (Enforcement of Hudood) Ordinance, 1979, stated that an adult male is defined as having attained the age of 18 years, a female as having attained the age of 16, or reached puberty. **[21b]**

23.48 The USSD Report 2012 stated 'Although forced marriage is a criminal offense and many cases were filed, prosecution remained a problem. There were reports of citizens abroad bringing their daughters back to the country, taking away their legal documents, and forcing them into marriage against their will.' **[3n] (Section 6)**

23.49 In its 'Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Pakistan', dated 1 March 2013, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women were concerned about:

'... the existence of multiple legal systems with regard to marriage and family relations in the State party and its discriminatory impact on women. It is concerned about the current status of Hindu and Christian law on marriage and divorce and the fact that under Muslim law women have unequal rights to inheritance, upon dissolution of marriage and its economic consequences as well as unequal rights in respect to guardianship of children. It is concerned about the persistence of child and forced marriages and at the fact that the minimum age of marriage for girls is 16 years. It is deeply concerned about the abduction of women and girls belonging to religious minorities for the purpose of forced conversion and forced marriages. It is also concerned that polygamy is permitted under certain circumstances. The Committee also notes with concern that property relations are governed by a regime of separate property, which often discriminates against women.' **[79g] (paragraph 37)**

See also Freedom of religion: [Christians](#) and [Hindus and Sikhs](#), and Children: [Underage/forced marriage](#)

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Marriage

23.50 The USSD IRF Report 2012 noted that:

'The government does not recognize either civil or common law marriage. Marriages generally are performed and registered according to one's religious group; however, there is no legal mechanism for the government to register marriages of Hindus and Sikhs. The marriages of non-Muslim men remain legal upon conversion to Islam. If a non-Muslim female converts to Islam and her marriage was performed according to her previous religious beliefs, the marriage is considered dissolved. Children born to Hindu or Christian women who convert to Islam after marriage are considered illegitimate. The only way to legitimize the marriage and render the children legitimate and eligible for inheritance is for the husband to convert to Islam. The children of a Muslim man and a Muslim woman who both convert to another religious group are considered illegitimate, and the government can take custody of the children...

'The Hindu and Sikh communities, as well as the Scheduled Caste Rights Movement, continued to demand official registration of their marriages. The minorities' representatives asserted that in the absence of Hindu and Sikh marriage registration, women faced difficulties inheriting their parents' and husbands' property, accessing health services, voting, obtaining a passport, and buying or selling property.' **[3k] (Section II)**

23.51 The website everyculture.com, accessed 27 June 2013, stated, in an undated report on Pakistan, that:

'One form of a Muslim marriage involves a nikah, a formal legal document signed by the bride and groom in front of several witnesses; this establishes that the couple is legally married.

'There are other Muslim marriage traditions as well. One includes the mayun or lagan which takes place three or four days before the marriage and starts with the bride retiring to a secluded area of her home. On the day before the marriage there is a mehndi ceremony, when the bride's hands and feet are painted with henna. When the marriage ceremony takes place it is required that at least two witnesses be there, and all the guests offer a short prayer for the success of the marriage. After the ceremony, dried dates are distributed to the guests. Wedding customs vary somewhat among provinces, but the Muslim marriage is seen as uniting both families as well as the couple.

'Each tribal group also has certain ceremonies that are an important part of the marriages within that group.' **[94a] (Marriage, Family and Kinship)**

23.52 The HRCP Report 2010 stated in respect of personal laws that:

'... lack of codification of personal laws of some religious minorities in Pakistan meant that matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, etc., were regulated by customary law. One of the biggest concerns for religious minorities such as Hindus, Sikhs and

Bahais was the lack of a mechanism for registration of marriages. Married couples did not have any official certificate showing that they were married, which became a hurdle for married women in acquiring passports. The couples had to make individual petitions in courts and although the courts issued such orders they applied only to the petitioners and were not the ideal solution to the absence of a marriage registration mechanism. Lack of registration of marriages also had implications for legal recourse for spouses in case of matrimonial disputes.' **[27e] (p136)**

See also Freedom of religion: [Hindus and Sikhs](#)

23.53 The USSD IRF Report 2008 cited that:

'A Muslim man can marry a woman "of the Book" (Jew or Christian) but cannot marry a woman of any other religious group unless she converts to Islam, Judaism, or Christianity. Muslim women may only marry Muslim men... In effect, the Government recognizes a marriage if both bride and groom are of the same religious group, irrespective of the sect, or if the groom is Muslim and bride is "of the Book." Children born to these couples are considered legitimate. If the bride is Muslim and groom is not, they are not considered married and their children are illegitimate. Since Muslim males are not allowed to convert to any other religious group, the only way the marriage can be legitimated and the children made eligible for inheritance is if the groom converts to Islam.' **[3m] (Section II)**

23.54 Also on the subject of marriage the USSD Report 2012 stated that 'Although the government generally did not interfere with the right to marry, local officials on occasion assisted influential families in preventing marriages that the families opposed. The government also failed to prosecute cases in which families punished members (generally women) for marrying or seeking a divorce against the wishes of other family members.' **[3n] (Section 1f)**

23.55 The same source noted 'Women are legally free to marry without family consent, but women who did so frequently were ostracized or faced becoming the victims of honor crimes.' **[3n] (Section 6)**

23.56 However, the HRCP Report 2010 noted that:

'The SHC [Supreme High Court] restrained the police from arresting or harassing Jameelan and Nazir Husain who had taken marriage vows without the permission of the girl's family. In her petition to the court Jameelan had stated that she had married Nazir Husain after executing an affidavit about her free choice before a magistrate. Her brother and other relatives had declared her and her husband as Karo and Kari and hence liable to be killed. A case for kidnapping her had also been filed against her husband. She had sought the court's protection against police attempts to harass the couple.' **[27e] (p59)**

See also Honour killings: [Love marriages](#)

23.57 The USSD Report 2009 stated 'Upon conversion to Islam, women's marriages performed under the rites of their previous religion were considered dissolved, but the marriages of men who converted remained intact.' **[3b] (Section 1f)**

23.58 The USSD Report 2012 added 'A World Population Foundation survey in 2009 found that 49 percent of women between the ages of 20 and 24 were married before the age

of 18. In 2008 the Family Planning Association of Pakistan estimated that child marriages made up 32 percent of marriages in the country. In rural areas poor parents sometimes sold their daughters into marriage, in some cases to settle debts or disputes.’ **[3n] (Section 6)**

23.59 The USSD Report 2009 stated:

‘The World Bank released a study in 2007 indicating that approximately one-third of marriages in rural areas were “watta satta,” exchange marriages in which men marry each other’s sisters. The study indicated that the reciprocal nature of the practice provided some measure of protection for women. According to the study, “women in watta satta marriages have substantially and significantly lower probabilities of marital estrangement, domestic abuse, and major depressive episodes.” Human rights groups such as the HRCF criticized the practice, noting that “these marriages treat women as a commodity, and tension within one household also affects the other”.’ **[3b] (Section 5)**

23.60 The USSD Report 2012 observed:

‘The practice of buying and selling brides also continued in rural areas, although prohibited by law. Many tribes, communities, or families continued the practice of sequestering women from all contact with men other than their relatives. Despite prohibitions on handing over women as compensation for crimes or as a resolution of a dispute (also known as “vani” or “swara”), the practice continued in Punjab and KP. In rural Sindh landowning families continued the practice of “marriage to the Quran,” forcing a female family member to stay unmarried to avoid division of property. Property of women married to the Quran remained under the legal control of their fathers or eldest brothers, and such women were prohibited from contact with any man older than age 14. These women were expected to stay in the home and not to contact anyone outside their families.’ **[3n] (Section 6)**

23.61 The USSD Report 2012 further noted that:

‘In response to these problems, the Senate passed the Prevention of Anti-Women Practice Amendment Act in December 2011. The law criminalizes and punishes giving a female in marriage to settle a civil or criminal dispute; depriving a woman of her rights to inherit movable or immovable property by deceitful or illegal means; coercing or in any manner compelling a woman to enter into marriage; and compelling, arranging, or facilitating the marriage of a woman with the Quran, including forcing her oath on the Quran to remain unmarried or not to claim her share of an inheritance. During the same session, the Senate also unanimously passed the Acid Control and Acid Crime Practice Bill 2010, which makes maiming or killing via corrosive substance a crime and imposes stiff penalties against perpetrators. As with other laws, these measures are not applicable to FATA and PATA unless the president issues a notification to this effect.’ **[3n] (Section 6)**

23.62 The Freedom House Freedom in the World 2013 – Pakistan report also noted that ‘Illegal forms of child and forced marriage remain problems... Most interfaith marriages are considered illegal, and the children of such unions would be illegitimate.’ **[5a]**

See also Children: [Underage/forced marriage](#)

23.63 On marriages by proxy, a Foreign and Commonwealth Office official from the British High Commission (BHC) in Islamabad stated in an [email](#) dated 10 November 2010 that:

'... proxy (telephonic) marriage is acceptable in Islam and also under the Muslim Family laws ordinance 1961. The condition is that both the parties (Bride and the Groom) should be present at both ends with their witnesses. Whereas in Ahmadis the proxy marriage can be contracted even without the presence of the bride and the groom and with only the presence of their Waliys (representatives).

'If a marriage is contracted with one of the above procedures and the marriage certificate has all the necessary attestations and is registered with the concerned authorities it can be considered as a valid marriage.' **[11n]**

- 23.64 A further [email](#) from an official in the Consular Section of the BHC, dated 9 November 2010, stated that they '... do not recognise a proxy marriage done where one of the party was in the UK, and the other was in Pakistan.' **[11o]**

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Divorce

- 23.65 The USSD Report 2012 reported that 'Family law provides protection for women in cases of divorce, including requirements for maintenance, and lays out clear guidelines for custody of minor children and their maintenance. However, many women were unaware of these legal protections or unable to obtain legal counsel to enforce them. Divorced women often were left with no means of support, as their families ostracized them.' **[3n] (Section 6)**
- 23.66 The IRB noted in a Response to Information Request, dated 4 December 2007, that:
- '... According to Muslim family laws in Pakistan, a Muslim man has a unilateral right to divorce his wife. This is known as Talaq, whereas a Muslim woman can [only] dissolve her marriage with the intervention of [a] court. She does not have the unilateral right to pronounce talaq unless that right is delegated to her by the husband under marriage contract but this right is usually not delegated to [the] wife. While under Christian Family [laws], Christian women seeking to legally dissolve marriage confront such obstacles in terms of very strict grounds to prove, that many have ended up converting. And conversion means termination of any link with their community. Parents do not encourage their daughters to return home for fear of being stigmatized a "divorcee" which [is] tantamount to being a social pariah while husband's ill conduct is not questioned generally.' **[12j]**
- 23.67 On 9 January 2013 Reuters reported on divorced women in Pakistan. The article spoke of the stigma and dangers of divorce, including honour killings, and the difficulties faced by women in remarrying. **[10c]**
- 23.68 The Express Tribune reported in May 2012 that, although society's attitudes were becoming more tolerant of divorced women remarrying, the majority still faced considerable stigma from society and their own families. The article noted that divorced or widowed women became '... an easy target for all sorts of disparaging remarks and have to ward off questions that are put to their reputation.' **[92b]**
- 23.69 Citing the experiences of some divorced women living in Pakistan, the article stated:

'While Shahana [a divorced single mother] tries to survive as a single woman in a man's world, every single interaction with society at large brings yet another reminder of how deep-seated certain perceptions are. "When I go to an office to get some work done, I have seen that I am respected only until my computerised national identity card comes out. As soon as people find out that I don't have a husband, I see a complete change in their approach towards me," she says.' [92b]

- 23.70 Facing disapproval from her family, another divorced woman was quoted as saying "A daughter is a daughter only so long as she's unmarried. Once she gets married, she is treated like a guest in her parents' home and if her marriage fails, she is treated as an outsider and a burden..." [92b]

See also [Single women](#) and [Honour killings](#)

- 23.71 On the subject of divorce rights of Muslim women in Pakistan, the IRB noted in a Response to Information Request, dated 17 November 2010, that:

'A Muslim marriage, says the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), a Pakistan-based independent non-profit organization founded in 1992 "to serve as a source of expertise for policy analysis and development" ..., is "a contract and can be dissolved like any other contract"... Marriage among Muslims is similarly described as "a civil contract" that "can be the subject of dissolution for good cause" by Mian Muhibullah Kakakhel, the founder of Kakakhel Law Associates and a senior advocate of Pakistan's Supreme Court... As a contract, explains the SDPI, "both wife and husband have legal and religious rights to dissolve a marriage"...

'According to the SDPI, while a man has the "unilateral right of talaq" ... – the "absolute and inherent power to repudiate his wife" without offering any reason... – women legally dissolve their marriage under the following three circumstances:

- 'If the husband has "unconditionally delegated" the right of divorce in the nikahnama or marriage contract...
- 'If the wife files suit in family court for khula, which means "untying the knot" ... or "to put off as a man is said to khula his garment when he puts it off" ...
- 'If, under the Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act, 1939, she files suit for judicial divorce in family court...' [12r]

- 23.72 The same source continued:

'In spite of these "pronounced, guaranteed and statutory rights," the Kakakhel lawyer reported that it is "extremely difficult" for a woman to ask for her right to divorce, not only because Pakistan is "a male-oriented and male-dominated society," but also because the woman is "psychologically debarred from having access" to the laws governing her right to divorce... For an assistant professor of political science at the Metropolitan State College of Denver corresponding with the Research Directorate, the degree of difficulty depends on the woman's social class, education and financial independence, as well as the level of support she can expect from her family... But in the case of divorce through khula, the main difficulty would be the attack on her moral character that would come under a cross-examining lawyer's questions...' [12r]

- 23.73 On the subject of judicial divorce, the IRB noted:

‘Under the Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act, 1939, a woman who “regards the husband [as] at fault” can initiate a judicial divorce through a family court..., which were established under the West Pakistan Family Courts Act, 1964, to “adjudicate upon ... matters relating to the dissolution of marriage”... According to the SDPI, unless the couple reconciles, the family court issues a decree dissolving the marriage and sends it to a union council..., an elected local government body of 13 councillors headed by a nazim, or mayor, and a naib nazim, or deputy mayor... The divorce does not come into effect until the end of iddat... a prescribed waiting period during which a woman cannot remarry...; iddat can last either 90 days after the union council has received the dissolution decree or, if the wife is pregnant, until the birth of a child... If the divorce is granted, the union council issues a divorce certificate and the woman keeps her mehr..., or mahr..., a dower given to the wife by the husband...’ [12r]

23.74 As for grounds for judicial divorce, the IRB cited:

‘Section 2 of the Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act, 1939 permits divorce on any one of the following grounds:

- ‘(i) that the whereabouts of the husband have not been known for a period of four years;
- ‘(ii) that the husband has neglected or has failed [sic] to provide for her maintenance for a period of two years;
- ‘(ii-A) that the husband has taken an additional wife in contravention of the provisions of the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance, 1961;
- ‘(iii) that the husband has been sentenced to imprisonment for a period of seven years or upwards;
- ‘(iv) that the husband has failed to perform, without reasonable cause, his marital obligations for a period of three years;
- ‘(v) that the husband was impotent at the time of the marriage and continues to be so;
- ‘(vi) that the husband has been insane for a period of two years or is suffering from leprosy or a virulent venereal disease; ...
- ‘(viii) that the husband treats her with cruelty, that is to say:
 - (a) habitually assaults her or makes her life miserable by cruelty of conduct even if such conduct does not amount to physical ill-treatment, or
 - (b) associates with women of evil repute or leads an infamous life, or
 - (c) attempts to force her to lead an immoral life, or
 - (d) disposes of her property or prevents her exercising her legal rights over it, or
 - (e) obstructs her in the observance of her religious profession or practice, or
 - (f) if he has more wives than one, does not treat her equitably in accordance with the injunctions of the Quran;
- ‘(ix) on any other ground which is recognized as valid for the dissolution of marriages under Muslim Law (Pakistan 1939)

‘Section 2 also allows a woman to repudiate a marriage that was contracted by her parents or guardians while she was still a minor, provided that the marriage was not consummated... or consummated before she was 16 years old...’ [12r]

23.75 On khula divorce, the same IRB response stated:

'Female scholar Shagufta Omar, writing in 2007 in Policy Perspectives, a biannual journal published by the Institute of Policy Studies, Islamabad, defines khula as "divorce on the wife's demand," the basis of which is the Quran... In Islamic or Sharia law a Muslim woman has the right to initiate divorce when she feels she can no longer live with her husband... because of what the SDPI calls "an irretrievable breakdown of the marriage"...

'According to Omar, the process for dissolving a marriage on the basis of khula is through an agreement between the woman and her husband... This marriage dissolution, Omar says, is obtained "only through court since out-of-court khula settlements are not so common"... The SDPI also indicates that the wife files suit for khula in a family court... On the other hand, the Kakakhel lawyer says that khula may be obtained either through mutual agreement or by court order...

'Although a woman can dissolve her marriage through khula, she does so "by surrendering certain rights given to her," such as dower... A law professor at the University of Warwick who specializes in Islamic law and Pakistani women's rights also indicated in correspondence with the Research Directorate that, if a woman asks for khula, she must relinquish her mehr or marriage gift... The SDPI similarly states that, in a case of khula, the wife "usually" has to return the mehr, as well as "other benefits" obtained from the husband... However, Ayesha Shahid, a lecturer at the University of Hull in the United Kingdom, summarizes Pakistan Superior Court decisions on the payment of dower to divorced women in a 2009 conference paper in which she notes that the courts have taken a positive and liberal approach in interpreting Islamic principles relating to dissolution of marriage by khula and payment/repayment of dower. The courts have refused to accept the plea of the husband for recovery of dower in cases where khula was obtained because of the cruelty or any other fault of the husband...' [12r]

23.76 With regards to divorce for Christian, Hindu and Parsi women, the IRB noted:

'The SDPI indicates that unlike the reforms such as the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance of 1961 which have benefited Muslim women, there has been no development since colonial times of the personal laws relating to [Christian, Hindu and Parsi] communities. The Hindu community in particular do[es] not have any specific codified laws relating to family matters which are instead governed by custom...

'However, reports the SDPI, "[m]embers of minority communities can and do approach the country's regular Family Courts since the Family Courts Act of 1964 does not restrict its jurisdiction to Muslims alone"...

'More specifically, the SDPI indicates that Christian marriages, unlike Muslim marriages, are "regarded as a holy union"... Dissolution of a Christian marriage occurs primarily through the death of one of the spouses; divorce is "permitted only on very restricted grounds for both husband and wife"... However, The Divorce Act 1869 does provide grounds for divorce, which include offences such as adultery, rape, and "adultery coupled with cruelty"... Parsi marriage, on the other hand, is governed by The Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act 1936. The marriage can be dissolved by the husband or the wife through a family court if, for example, a spouse is of unsound mind (although only after three years of marriage), has deserted the marriage, has been jailed for seven or more years or has committed adultery or rape... As for Hindu marriages, the SDPI says that, "[i]n general, there is no concept of divorce among Hindus, although some file

divorce suits in the Family Courts pleading the existence of the custom in their community”...’ **[12r]**

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Inheritance and child custody

23.77 With regard to inheritance laws, the USSD Report 2012 observed that the law ‘... clearly discriminates against women; however, the Anti-Women Practices Act, passed in December 2011, makes it illegal to deny women inheritance of property by deceitful means. Female children are entitled to one-half the inheritance of male children. Wives inherit one-eighth of their husband’s estate. In practice women often received far less than their legal entitlement.’ **[3n] (Section 6)**

23.78 Shirkat Gah – Women’s Resource Centre, Pakistan, made a ‘Stakeholders Joint Submission for Pakistan’s Review in The Human Rights Council -14th Session, October 2012’ (Shirkat Gah Stakeholders Joint Submission), undated, accessed 8 May 2012, in which it stated:

‘The legislative framework regulating the law of inheritance for Muslims in Pakistan results in inequalities between the shares received by men and women. Moreover with regard to the share that is prescribed by the law, most women feel that they are manipulated out of it or are under social pressure to forfeit it in favour of the male members of the family. The Constitution of Pakistan gives women the legal right to own property, and when cases of denial or usurping women’s inheritance are brought to Court, the Courts have consistently upheld this right even if women have technically given their share to their brothers. However, in reality customary practices dictate what women are allowed to own, and their right to inheritance is easily evaded under family and social pressures. Generally in all four Provinces of Pakistan, according to customary practice, women do not inherit property and widows customarily lose their right to inheritance if they remarry outside the family of the deceased husband even though the law prescribes a prompt division of the deceased’s assets and the widow’s right to her share.’ **[132a] (p8)**

23.79 The US Department of State (USSD) recorded in its travel section by the Bureau of Consular Affairs on International Parental Child Abduction, Pakistan, undated, accessed 10 August 2011, that:

‘Under Pakistani family law, which is based on Islamic law, the father controls virtually all aspects of his family’s life. He decides where his wife and children will live, how the children are to be educated and whether or where they may travel. Courts rarely, if ever, give custody of children to a woman who is not a Muslim, who will not raise the children as Muslims, does not plan to raise them in Pakistan, or has remarried. In all probability, even if the mother wins custody, the children would still need the father’s permission, to leave the country. Any matter of custody in Pakistan can only be resolved through the appropriate local judicial system...In Pakistan, most mothers do not earn an income. The courts keep this in mind in determining what is in the best interests of the child. A father is legally bound to take care of his children no matter what since he is the income earner. A mother is not so bound. That is why, in most cases, the father is granted custody... Laws protecting the rights of mothers are written into the Quran (Koran). Under Islamic law, a woman has the right to keep a boy child up to the age of seven years and a girl child up to the age of twelve...’ **[3i]**

23.80 The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) noted in its section on Parental Child Abduction, Pakistan, dated 20 March 2013, that:

‘Both civil and religious laws are used in custody cases in Pakistan. Under Muslim personal law the father is the natural guardian of a child and the mother is allowed physical or actual custody (hizanat) of a male child up to the age of seven years and of a female child until puberty (at 16 years). Under Sunni law, a mother has custody of a male child until the age of seven and of a female child until the age of puberty (at 16 years). Under Sharia law a mother has custody of a male child until the age of two and of a female child until the age of seven. However, a guardian judge has the power to award legal guardianship to either parent or even a third person if in the best interests of the child.’ **[11j] (Custody issues)**

23.81 The same source added ‘Under the provisions of the Guardians and Wards Act, 1890, which focuses on the welfare of the child, the guardian court is empowered to override religious laws where, in the view of the court, the child’s welfare is at stake. Therefore the court may decide not to give custody to the mother even during the period of “hizanat” if the court finds that the mother is unsuitable to look after the child.’ **[11j] (Custody issues)**

23.82 With regards to a parent taking their child out of Pakistan, the FCO noted ‘If a parent has custody of a child in Pakistan, he or she automatically has the right to remove the child from the country as long as no restrictions have been imposed on their travel by a guardian judge. No special application needs to be made to remove the child, whether for a holiday or other purpose. If any restrictions have been imposed the parent needs permission from the court to leave the country with the child.’ **[11j] (Custody issues)**

See also Sections: Children: [Legal rights](#) and [Underage/forced marriage](#), Freedom of religion: [Inter-faith marriage](#) and [Exit and return](#)

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Adoption

23.83 The Australian Government Migration Review Tribunal responded to a series of questions on the adoption process in Pakistan, dated 28 January 2010, much of which was cited from ‘O’Halloran, K. 2009, The Politics of Adoption: International Perspectives on Law, Policy & Practice, 2nd edition, Springer, 22 January’,:

‘Please advise the situation in Pakistan regarding legal adoptions? Is there provision in the law for them?’

‘Pakistan’s legal system is based on the shariah, which does not recognise adoption in the legal sense – that is, to establish a parent-child relationship between individuals who are not related by blood. Consequently, there is no statutory provision for adoption in Pakistan. The following excerpt from The Politics of Adoption explains the tension between adoption and Islam:

‘Islam does not, strictly speaking, recognize the term “adoption”. In most Islamic states, adoption as it is known in western nations is impossible. Any process that purports to alter family genealogy, to change the authentic identity of an individual and potentially disadvantage “legitimate” children, is generally frowned upon in Muslim culture. Adoption in particular is anathema as it

involves the permanent and absolute transfer of parental rights to adoptive parents, a denial of ancestry and falsifying of bloodlines...

‘Despite this, Pakistan law enables children to be placed under the guardianship of a suitable individual – as an alternative means of care. In 1994, the Pakistan government provided the following information concerning in-country adoptions, and the situation appears to remain current:

‘Adoption is not governed by any law in Pakistan/Islam. It does not mean that adoption is literally prohibited in Pakistan. Children in especial circumstances are placed under the guardianship of their near relatives or suitable person appointed by Court. In that case the children do not automatically adopt the parentage of their guardians. They will legally enjoy all social and economic rights except for inheritance of property from their guardian...’

‘Please advise the situation regarding customary adoptions? Are such processes available and if so, what are they?’

‘In Pakistan, kafala defines a system of alternative care that could be considered a form of customary adoption. It provides a model of alternative care that – unlike legal adoption – preserves the blood ties between the child and its biological parents – an acceptable practice under Islam. An excerpt from *The Politics of Adoption* provides a definition of kafala:

‘Kafala is an Arabic legal term for a formal pledge to support and care for a specific orphaned or abandoned child until he or she reaches majority. A form of unilateral contract, it is used in various Islamic nations to assure protection for such minors, as these nations generally do not legally recognize the concept of adoption.

‘Under kafala, children are placed under the guardianship of an individual – always the male in the case of a married couple – through either an informal or formal arrangement:

‘In Islam what can be termed adoption is at best an alternative care arrangement for a child whose parents have died or are unable to provide the necessary physical care, love and protection. Such children are then cared for by a set of parents or guardians who act as caregivers with the consent, whether written or verbal, from the natural parents or next of kin. Natural parents do not give up their parental rights. Instead, by mutual agreement, they make care arrangements with others for the upbringing of their child.

‘Importantly, under kafala, adopted children have no inheritance rights and typically do not take on the family surname. This is due to the primacy Islam places on family relationships, parentage and lineage. However, adoptive parents may bequeath property rights on their adopted children, according to O’Halloran:

‘Islam places great importance upon respecting the inviolable integrity of the “natural” family unit. While he or she [the child] has no inherent legal rights of inheritance in relation to their adopters, the latter may make arrangements during their lifetime to confer property rights on their adopted children.

'Kafala appears to take place without the state involvement in certain circumstances, for example between members of an extended family. Put by O'Halloran:

'By far the majority of adoptions in Islamic states take the form of informal, long-term, first party, care arrangements (or kafala) within the child's extended family and, as there are no placement rights as such, the parties are essentially left to their own devices. In third party domestic adoptions, where all rights in respect of the orphan or abandoned child are vested in the designated government agency, the placement procedure is controlled by that agency.

'Kafala is also a practice that has UN recognition under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Pakistan is a signatory:

'UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 20

1. A child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State.
2. States Parties shall in accordance with their national laws ensure alternative care for such a child.
3. Such care could include, inter alia, foster placement, kafalah of Islamic law, adoption or if necessary placement in suitable institutions for the care of children. When considering and to the child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background.

'It appears that the Guardianship and Wards Act 1890 governs custody of children in Pakistan. Is this relevant to either legal or customary adoption?

'The Guardians and Wards Act 1890 (originally promulgated under the British system) is relevant to customary adoption in that it formalises the guardian-ward relationship. Under the Act, the relevant district court can issue a guardianship order:

'Guardians and Wards Act 1890

Article 7. Power of the court to make order as to guardianship

- (1) Where the court is satisfied that it is for the welfare of a minor that an order should be made-
 - (a) appointing a guardian of his person or property, or both, or
 - (b) declaring a person to be such a guardian, the court may make an order accordingly.

'The Act enables an individual to obtain legal guardianship of a child (a practice consistent with kafala but not mandatory). All sources appear to indicate that kafala can be done in conjunction with the state, but this is probably more common when an orphanage or third party is involved.

'To obtain legal guardianship, an application must be submitted to the relevant district court for consideration. O'Halloran provides an overview of the judicial process in Pakistan:

'Generally, domestic adoption arrangements in Islamic states proceed with a minimum of formality. ... In Pakistan, applicants may seek a guardianship order in respect of an orphan or foundling and, as a first step, will be assessed by government officials known as Deputy Commissioners. The assessment will

take the form of a home study report accompanied by the usual references and an assessment of their eligibility and suitability to provide a home environment likely to safeguard the welfare of the child concerned. If approved, the child will then be transferred from an orphanage to their care and they will be vested with custody and guardianship rights. If the child's parents are known to the authorities, and the applicants wish to "adopt", then they will have to enter into an irrevocable, bilateral, intra-familial agreement in writing in which the birth parent/s clearly waive any right to reclaim their child.

'Despite the availability of this process, the practice of kafala does not appear to stipulate a requirement to legalise guardianship. Moreover, O'Halloran notes that in "Islamic countries, most domestic adoptions are first party informal care arrangements or kafala and are not necessarily endorsed by court orders." Jillani & Associates – a Pakistan-based law firm specialising in family law – also provides the following information:

'A guardian can be a de facto or a de jure one. Legal guardians and those appointed by the court are de jure guardians. A father is the natural guardian of a child under the age of 18 years under the GWA [Guardians and Wards Act 1890].

'As opposed to a de jure guardian, a person, like the mother, brother, uncle, other relations except father and father's father, or an institution like an orphanage, may voluntarily place himself or herself in charge of the person or property of the minor; a mother, however, is the next possible guardian after a father, unless the latter, by his will, has appointed another person as the guardian of the child. She under certain circumstances can appoint a guardian by will. She can do so during the lifetime of her husband if he is incapable of acting; or after his death. A de facto guardian, as opposed to a de jure guardian, is merely a custodian of the person and property of the minor.

'Consequently, it would be reasonable to expect that not all "adoptions" are formalised in Pakistan. However, there is no information to indicate the extent to which either de jure or de facto guardianship is practised, nor is there any information to indicate which is preferred.

'Please provide any other information which would shed light on how adoptions take place in Pakistan.

'... O'Halloran has provided some additional information on adoptions in Pakistan...:

'Fostering, in theory, is positively encouraged because it does not involve any transfer of parental rights nor does it obscure a child's identity. Indeed, there is always the possibility of such children being fostered by non-relatives. Childless couples (even foreign Muslim childless couples) may take in a child from an orphanage, or a "spare" child from a large family, and then later, in another country, may adopt that child. In Pakistan, for example, as long as the child is to be brought up as a Muslim, the courts will agree to such arrangements and will give permission for the child to be taken abroad...' **[134b]**

See also Children: [Legal rights](#)

Women in the workplace

- 23.84 In its 'Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Pakistan', dated 1 March 2013, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women were concerned about:
- '... the low participation of women in the formal sector, the job segregation and concentration of women in low-paid and low-skilled jobs and the widening pay gap and lack of legal provisions guaranteeing the principle of equal pay for work of equal value. It is concerned at the situation of women working in the informal sector (agriculture, domestic and home-based work) the fact that they are not recognized in the existing labour legislation as workers are unprotected and do not have access to social security and benefits.' **[79g] (paragraph 29)**
- 23.85 The USSD Report 2012 observed, with regard to women's rights at work, that 'Women faced significant discrimination in employment and frequently were paid less than men for similar work. In many rural areas of the country, strong societal pressure prevented women from working outside the home. Some tribes continued the traditional practice of sequestering women from all contact with men other than relatives.' **[3n] (Section 6)**
- 23.86 The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) noted in its EFA [Education for All] Global Monitoring Report 2012 that, in Pakistan '... men earn 60% more than women, on average. The wage gap is widest for those with low levels of literacy and numeracy. Yet education can make a big difference to women's earnings... women with a high level of literacy earned 95% more than women with no literacy skills, whereas the differential was only 33% among men.' **[141a] (p17)**
- 23.87 On 6 August 2012 the UN General Assembly reproduced Pakistan's 'National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21', for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated 'The share of women in employment has increased steadily over the years. All government jobs are open to women including the armed forces and police. A 10 percent quota has been reserved for women in the federal services while Punjab and Sindh have announced 15 percent and 25 percent quota respectively for women in provincial jobs.' **[83b] (paragraph 48)**
- 23.88 The HRCP Report 2010 stated with regards to recently introduced legislation that:
- 'A positive development was the enactment of two laws to deal with sexual harassment. One of these laws amended the Pakistan Penal Code to provide for a harsher penalty for the offence under Section 509 besides offering a better definition of sexual abuse. The other law, adopted in March [2010], was the Protection against Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act, which laid down a code of conduct devised to prevent and punish sexual harassment at workplace. A number of public and private establishments agreed to adopt the code.' **[27e] (p204)**
- 23.89 The HRCP Report 2011 noted however, that the Sexual Harassment Act '... had not been implemented by many ministries, including interior, defence production, investment, ports and shipping, and textile industries. Only three hospitals nationwide

had adopted the law. The Environment Ministry adopted the code in late January [2011]. In April [2011], there was focus on provincial-level implementation of the law, as well as ensuring appointment of ombudspersons in provinces.’ **[27g] (p160)**

23.90 The same source reported that in January 2011 ‘... the government announced its plans to construct hostels in major cities of the country, including Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi, keeping in view the residential problems of working women, and implementation was keenly awaited.’ **[27g] (p161)**

23.91 The AHRC Report 2008 asserted that:

‘In the workplace women must still contend with lower salaries, and sexual misconduct is common. They are generally not paid according to the law and receive few benefits. The majority are not officially registered so are vulnerable to occupational abuse. It is mostly women that work in government factories and other informal sectors (unregistered under government laws), and here they have no labour law benefits, such as medical allowances, pregnancy allowances, transport or childcare services from the factory management. Through a finance bill passed during the Musharraf government, most are now expected to work 12 hours rather than the original eight. In rural areas women are often required by employers or landlords to work all day alongside their husbands for little extra remuneration, often as bonded labour, to pay off loans.’ **[52b] (p12)**

Socio-economic indicators

23.92 In its ‘Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Pakistan’, dated 1 March 2013, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women stated concern at:

‘... the pervasive gender inequality in the field of education, which is characterized by high illiteracy rate amongst women, the low enrolment of girls, particularly at the secondary level, and their high dropout rate, especially in the rural areas. It is further concerned about the negative impact on girls of prioritization of boy’s education over girls, the lack of qualified female teachers and school infrastructure, and the long distances to school, all of which have a negative impact on girls’ education. It is also concerned at the lack of measures to readmit girls in school after pregnancy and the high number of child marriages in the State party.’ **[79g] (paragraph 27)**

23.93 The World Health Organisation (WHO) Annual Report of the Regional Director 2011 – Country statistical profiles, undated, listed a number of socio-economic statistics for men and women in Pakistan. Based on figures from 2010, girls/women are less likely to be educated than boys/men (82 per cent of girls were in primary school, 49 per cent in secondary school, compared to 98 per cent and 65 per cent of boys respectively) and have lower literacy rates than men (42 per cent of women over 15 years are literate; compared to 67 per cent of men). **[14a]**

23.94 The same WHO report also provided some basic healthcare data that directly related to women with access to primary health care services: antenatal care was provided to 61 per cent of the population (in 2007); and, as of 2009, 87 per cent of births were attended by ‘skilled health personnel’. **[14a]**

23.95 The HRC Report 2009 stated with regards to the gender gap in Pakistan that:

'The Gender Gap Index [GGI] is used to measure the level of inequality that exists between women and men through gaps in different indicators. The four pillars of the index are: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, political empowerment and health and survival. A GGI study revealed that Sindh had a value of 0.58 in the economic participation and opportunity index, followed by NWFP (0.312) and Balochistan (0.2514). With an index value of 0.1718 Punjab, surprisingly, has the lowest value in economic participation and education. NWFP leads all the provinces in the educational attainment index with a value of [0].249, followed by Punjab with a value of 0.163 and Balochistan representing a value of 0.148. Punjab has the minimum gender gap in the health and survival index with a value of 0.236, followed by NWFP (0.2088) The overall value of [GGI] for Pakistan is 0.551 which is ranked 126th among 128 countries, indicating women's overall low societal status in the country.' [27c] (p189)

See also Sections: [Medical Issues](#); and [Children - Education](#)

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Single women

23.96 The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) noted in a response by its Research Directorate, dated 14 January 2013, that, according to a representative from the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) '... it is "next to impossible" for a single woman to live alone in Pakistan due to prejudices against women and economic dependence.' [12u] (5. Shelters)

23.97 In a response dated 17 November 2010, the IRB noted that:

'For women to live alone and unmarried in Pakistan, it will depend on which province and in what context they are living, reported the Metropolitan State College of Denver Assistant Professor... The Assistant Professor explained that, socio-economically, "Pakistan has [a] very sharp rural and urban divide"..'.

'Rural is collectivist, community/village based, agrarian, traditional, more illiterate and poor. Women are not recognized as an individual member of the community, they are members of their male-dominated family. Woman's life in the village context is a matter of concern for every man of the neighborhood community. There is no concept of an "unattached" woman. She has to live with her family. What do widows, divorced or spinsters do? They live with their parental or in-laws family. Older women with grown up children normally depend on their sons or daughters. There are always exceptions to their situations in the rural context but generally it is not socially safe and acceptable for [single] women to live in the rural context.

'Urban is semi-collectivist and individualistic, more literate, with better infrastructure and transportation facilities and plenty of job opportunities i.e. skilled or unskilled. Urban is different but still there are difficulties for single women. Here, class is the main determinant of woman's choices for her life style. In big cities educated women with jobs or some property income would not have much difficulty to live alone...

'The Law Professor also said that "[i]t all depends on who you are, what resources you have, which part of the country you come from, [and] what your own educational and economic, professional status is"..' [12r]

23.98 The IRB added, on the degree of independence experienced by women living in Pakistan, that:

‘Both the Assistant Professor and the Law Professor said that the ability of women to act independently differs depending on their level of education ... For example, the Assistant Professor said that “[e]ducated urban, upper/middle class working women or housewives do not find it difficult to rent an apartment or to open a bank account or travel domestically or internationally. Women in the rural areas normally do not rent a house or any other place. Due to lack of education, they are normally accompanie[d] by a male member to open an account or to do other things in public sphere.”...

‘The Law Professor also indicated that, although there are no laws preventing a woman to open her own bank account, “it depends [on] who that woman is,” whether she’s literate, has her own identification, and can travel alone... As the Professor explained, This is more to do with access rather than the law or society. If a professional woman, earning good money went to rent an apartment, no one would bat an eyelid. [B]ut that is because her sense of autonomy and authority would make her able to do so...’ **[12r]**

23.99 The same source added on the treatment of single women:

‘The Assistant Professor reported that a woman living alone in a rural area is an “exceptional situation” that “is not liked by her family or community”... However, the Assistant Professor allowed that the woman’s age should be taken into consideration... If she is an older woman, in her 70s or 80s, it would not be a big problem in both contexts, rural and urban or in any class. A young or a middle age woman finds it hard to live alone in all of these contexts. All kind [of] gossips surround her and she is watched by everyone for every move she makes...

‘The Law Professor stated that the absence of a male relative may make a woman “vulnerable” and added that “the worsening law and order situation” has made Pakistan “a generally unsafe place to be”... Younger women risk attracting “unwanted attention from men”; older women may find themselves taken advantage of by their helpers... The Assistant Professor also said that a woman “[l]iving alone in majority of the contexts such as rural (which is about 70% of Pakistan) and lower/middle class urban” would put herself at “risk for her safety and security”... The Law Professor likewise said that any attempt to break away from her family “might pose a danger” to the safety of even “a resourceful woman”...’ **[12r]**

23.100 The IRB put into context the regional differences with regards to single women, which stated:

‘In a follow-up to initial correspondence with the Research Directorate, the Assistant Professor explained that of Pakistan’s four provinces-Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan and Khayber Pakhtunkhah (KP) (formerly the North-West Frontier Province [NWFP]) – the urban centres in Punjab and Sindh are “more educated and liberal” while cities in Balochistan and KP have a “very conservative culture. It would be easier for an educated single woman to live alone in Karachi or Lahore but not in Peshawar or Quetta”... The Assistant Professor added that [s]ocial and physical mobility of single women in Pakistan is not an easy thing. An educated woman working in a multinational [organisation] may move easily from Karachi to Lahore or Islamabad (capital city) [but] not to the rural areas or to the smaller cities. If she is hiding from her family or her husband, it would be much difficult for her do that...

‘Similarly, the Law Professor said that “maybe” an “educated, professional woman,” with “resources,” could relocate and live alone in a city... But, the Law Professor cautioned, if she is young and does not have a male relative, it would be “difficult”...’ [12r]

23.101 In a Response to Information Request dated 4 December 2007, the IRB noted, following correspondence with an adjunct professor of gender studies and international studies at the University of Denver, that:

‘It is very hard for a single woman to live alone both in urban and rural areas. ... It depends on age, class, education, and urban or rural setting. Young unmarried/divorced women in all classes in urban areas find it difficult to live alone. They cannot get apartments to be rented. If they own a property, they can more conveniently opt to live alone but again there is social pressure around them and they have to face all kinds of gossips and scandals. In such case, age is their biggest problem. Older women can live alone but still they feel insecure socially and physically. We do have examples now in the big cities where highly educated and economically independent women opt to live alone but their percentage is very low. In the rural areas they mostly live with joint family even if they do not get along with them...’ [12j]

23.102 After consulting a representative from an NGO specialising in women’s issues, specifically with regards to women affected by Islamic laws and customs, the IRB also noted in the same Request that:

‘After having lived in Pakistan for one year, the Representative stated that she had only encountered one woman living alone; the Representative explained that this woman was able to live alone because she was an activist, was aware of her rights and understood the cultural system which permitted her to “navigate daily challenges.” She added that she was aware of other women who had tried to rent apartments on their own but were unable to do so because of resistance from landlords who assumed they were planning to open a brothel. The Representative specified that it is also rare for men to live alone in Pakistan because people are expected to live with their families until they get married and set up households of their own. The Representative added that even though it is not illegal for women to live alone, there would be obstacles for a woman to try to rent an apartment or house on her own and “[c]ultural pressures and personal security would continue to be issues, especially if it was common knowledge [that] a woman was living alone.”

‘A representative of Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Centre, a civil society organization in Pakistan promoting and advocating women's rights for the past 30 years, provided corroboration in correspondence dated 4 December 2007 to the Research Directorate that the situation of women living alone Pakistan depends on their social and economic status. The Representative also provided the following information: There has been an increasing trend in both urban and rural areas where husbands leave home for better employment options abroad. So wives of those usually live alone but the important aspect in such living situation is social acceptance and support from the family. Financial stability is often considered a strength by such women and they do not face negative criticism.’ [12j]

23.103 However, in a Response to Information Request dated 26 November 2009, on Resources available to female victims of violence in Karachi, Islamabad and Lahore, the IRB noted that, according to a report by the South Manchester Legal Centre (SMLC), dated January 2008, ‘... the Director of HRCP indicated that women cannot rent accommodations alone in Pakistan... Médecins du monde [an international

humanitarian organisation] similarly indicates that it is not socially acceptable for women to live alone in Pakistan; though the report also indicates that because it is easier to find employment in Lahore, a woman may be able to live independently there...’ [12n]

23.104 The IRB noted in its Response to Information Request, dated 4 December 2007, that:

‘The following information was provided in correspondence received on 22 November 2007 by a professor of law at the University of Warwick who specializes in women's human rights and gender and the law, who has written various publications on Pakistan and who is also a professor at the University of Oslo:

‘The response to your question depends upon the circumstances, location, socio-economic, educational and professional status of the single female. Generally, it would be accurate to say that single women are rarely able to live on their own without a male member of the family in Pakistan. Reasons for this are numerous but they primarily stem from custom and culture that requires a woman to have a male family member to be in a protective and supervisory role. Society also frowns upon women living on their own and would not help the reputation of the single woman. You may find one in a million single woman who has the means and can live in a big city with helpers, etc. to assist and protect her. This of course is a minority and an exception rather than the rule.’ [12j]

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Violence against women

23.105 In its ‘Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Pakistan’, dated 1 March 2013, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women expressed serious concern at:

‘...the persistence, amongst others, of child and forced marriages, Karo-Kari, stove burning and acid throwing, marriage to the Quran, polygamy and honour killing. It is concerned that in spite of the provisions in the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2004, which criminalize offenses in the name of so-called honour, the Qisas and Diyat Ordinances continue to be applied in these cases hence resulting in perpetrators being given legal concessions and/or being pardoned and not being prosecuted and punished. It expresses its concern at the high prevalence of domestic violence and marital rape and at the absence of clear legislation criminalizing such acts.’ [79g] (paragraph 21)

23.106 The HRCP Report 2012 stated ‘Violence against women remained deeply ingrained. Women were attacked and killed on account of asserting their rights to education, work, and generally for choosing to have a say in key decisions in their lives. Heinous crimes such as honour killings and acid attacks persisted without systematic measures being taken to prevent or prosecute such attacks.’ [27b] (p162)

23.107 The Human Rights Watch (HRW) World Report 2013, published 31 January 2013, covering 2012 events, stated ‘Violence against women and girls – including rape, “honor” killings, acid attacks, domestic violence, and forced marriage – remained a serious problem. Intimidation and threats against women and girls out in public increased in major cities in 2012.’ [7i] (Religious minorities and women)

23.108 The Asia Society 'Report by the Independent Commission on Pakistan Police Reform', entitled 'Stabilizing Pakistan through Police Reform', (Asia Society Report), dated July 2012, stated:

'Because of the prevailing patriarchal and misogynistic culture in Pakistan, women are victims of violence in both the private (domestic abuse) and public spheres (abuse in state agencies, in the workplace, and in educational institutions). Likewise, women face a form of violence in their interactions with law enforcement agencies as complainants. This "structural violence" manifests itself in the form of insensitivity within the justice system toward female complainants, negligence in responding, delay in action, and outright refusal to recognize the occurrence of violence.' **[138a] (p88)**

23.109 On 13 August 2012, the UN General Assembly published a summarised 'Compilation [of reports] prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/2 – Pakistan' for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated 'UNCT [United Nations Country Team] noted that victims of violence against women and gender-based violence generally do not report the cases or disclose them publicly because of the risk of stigmatization and repercussion from the perpetrators. It remained concerned as to the effectiveness of community-based Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) and harmonization with international commitments.' **[83c] (paragraph 17)**

23.110 The Asian Human Rights Commission stated in its report, The State of Human Rights in Pakistan: 2009 (AHRC Report 2009), published July 2010, that:

'As an explicitly Muslim state, the women of Pakistan are beholden to a number of Islamic principles. For one, the family is seen as the nucleus of society, the fundamental building block from which the rest of society emerges and evolves. Women are seen to be responsible for maintaining the sanctity of the family, and are thus those who are most likely to disrupt this sanctity. As such, the woman becomes the lynch pin of an ordered society; it is on her back that responsibility and power lies, both for her family and by extension, for all of society. While the violence against women enacted in this society occurs for manifold reasons, it seems that this understanding of women as both the lynch pin and the one with the power to unravel society, is a contributing factor to the continual mistreatment of women in Pakistan.

'Women face all kinds of violence perpetuated by the state and its agents, ranging from rape, gang rape, torture by state agents, registration of false cases of adultery, killing in the name of honour, Jirga (an illegal and parallel judicial system for the exchange of minor girls in land disputes) no free choice of marriages, restriction of freedom of movement and expression, domestic violence, sexual harassment at the workplace, forceful conversion to Islam, arbitrary punishment for blasphemy, deprivation of property rights, disappearance after arrest and being used as sex slaves in military torture cells. In extreme cases, punishments can include being buried alive or having acid thrown on them.' **[52a] (p201-202)**

23.111 The Asia Society Report noted:

'The behavior of the police toward women in Pakistan reflects the general attitude of Pakistani society as a whole, which is intent on denying the existence of violence and sending women back to their homes in the custody of a male guardian. If a woman seeks justice, she first has to register a case – through as a First Information Report

(FIR) – with the police. Even before doing so, she is immediately viewed as suspect, as it is generally believed that no decent woman would venture into a police station. If the case involves a family member, the police will brush it aside as a private matter to be resolved at home. Bribery, extortion, and coercion are all used to discourage or falsify registration.

See also [Arrest and detention – legal rights](#)

‘Physical abuse is not recognized unless the injury is “bone deep.” If the injury is a simple bruise or minor laceration, it does not qualify as a crime under the Criminal Procedures Code, and the police are unable to act. The police can, however, apply to a magistrate for a declaration to proceed with prosecution on behalf of the victim. They can exert pressure on an abusive person to change his behavior by taking him to court for a “Binding Over to Be of Good Behaviour Order” from a magistrate. Thus, even within the present system, options for addressing violence against women exist. The will and understanding to act, however, are missing.’ **[138a] (p88)**

23.112 The Express Tribune stated on 3 November 2012 that a report, based on media monitoring by the Awaz Foundation Centre for Development, cited 2,713 cases of violence against women (VAW) in southern Punjab during 2012. Cases of VAW (numbers in brackets) included:

‘... aas-aaf custom (10) – in which women accused of “bringing shame to the family” take an oath of innocence on the Holy Quran and then walk on burning coals spread over six metres–, abduction and torture after abduction (577), acid attacks (20), burning by throwing kerosene oil and petrol (17), kaala kaali (25), assault after divorce (45), assault by in-laws (100), “honour” killings (112), murder and assault for contracting a marriage with their free will (114), murder (162), victims of panchayat decisions where women were either sold or killed (37), rape (304), assault by police (20), suicide in reaction to family pressure, rape or other forms of violence (444), torture leading to physical or mental disability (489), wani (37), watta satta (25) and cases of gender discrimination and disinheritance (175).’ **[92I]**

23.113 In a press briefing, ‘Incidents of Violence against Women in Pakistan: Reported during 2011’, undated, accessed 13 March 2012, the Aurat Foundation (AF) provided a breakdown of major offences of violence against women (VAW) during the reporting period. The Aurat Foundation stated that it observed a 6.74 per cent increase in reported cases of VAW in 2011 compared to 2010, with 8,539 in 2011 against 8,000 in 2010. Of the 8,539 cases only 6,745 First Information Reports (FIRs) were lodged. Province wise, 6,188 cases were reported from Punjab; 1,316 from Sindh; 694 from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; 193 from Balochistan; and 148 from the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). The AF considered that, since its data was collected from media reports, a large number of VAW cases remained unknown as many went unreported. **[57c]**

23.114 The Aurat Foundation’s full report on [Violence Against Women in Pakistan: A qualitative review of statistics 2011](#), published July 2012, provided a comprehensive review of data and analysis on violence against women (VAW) in Pakistan during 2011. The report included tables of statistics on VAW across the districts of Pakistan. **[57d]**

23.115 The HRCP Report 2011 stated:

‘Abduction and kidnapping remained the most common crimes (1,137 cases), with murder (799 cases), rape and murder (396 cases) being the second and third most

commonly reported crimes. The figures for the Punjab were higher than those for Sindh, which was a change from last year, but the figures may be a result of what is reported and what remains silenced due to cultural pressures... In February 2011, the Senate was informed that over the past two years 8,433 cases of violence against women were registered in Punjab and a total of 11,798 all over the country.' **[27g] (p166)**

23.116 Amnesty International's Annual Report 2010 on Pakistan stated that 'In NWFP and the tribal areas, Taleban groups closed or burned down girls' schools, forced women to wear a veil and prohibited them from leaving their homes unless accompanied by male relatives. Several women were punished, shot dead or mutilated for alleged "immoral" activities. Legal redress sought for abuses of women's rights remained difficult to obtain.' **[13d] (p253; Violence against women and girls)**

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Domestic violence and acid attacks

23.117 The USSD Report 2012 recorded that 'No specific law prohibits domestic violence, which was a widespread and serious problem. Husbands reportedly beat and occasionally killed their wives. Other forms of domestic violence included torture, physical disfigurement, and shaving the eyebrows and hair off women's heads. In-laws abused and harassed the wives of their sons. Dowry and family-related disputes often resulted in death or disfigurement by burning or acid.' **[3n] (Section 6)**

23.118 The HRCP Report 2012 stated

'Perpetrators of domestic abuse were typically husbands, fathers and brothers and in-laws. Many cases of women being set on fire by the families of their spouses were Reported. According to media monitoring by HRCP, at least 41 girls and women became victims of acid attack in 2012; 15 women had their limbs amputated, mainly over suspicion of 'immorality'; heads of as many as 37 women were shaved to humiliate them; and 49 women were set on fire in different incidents across the country. The perpetrators in a majority of these cases were related to the victim.' **[27b] (p173)**

23.119 On 20 February 2012, The Express Tribune reported that the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill was unanimously passed by the upper house of parliament and would come into force once signed by President Asif Zardari. 'The law classifies domestic violence as acts of physical, sexual or mental assault, force, criminal intimidation, harassment, hurt, confinement and deprivation of economic or financial resources... Those found guilty of beating women or children will face a minimum six months behind bars and a fine of at least 100,000 rupees (\$1,100).' **[92h]**

23.120 However, on 16 April 2012, The Express Tribune reported that 'Clerics at Wafaq-ul-Madaris Al-Arabia Pakistan have demanded a "review" of the Domestic Violence Bill from the government, so that a consensus can be achieved on the law before it is presented to the parliament. According to a statement from the seminary's clerics, certain controversial clauses of the bill might destroy the family structure of the Muslim community... [the] Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) has already asked the government not to pursue the current form of the legislation.' **[92i]**

23.121 The Daily Times reported on 25 September 2012 that the Domestic Violence Bill had still to be adopted in law. **[55i]**

23.122 Pakistan Today reported on 8 March 2013 that:

‘[The] Sindh Assembly... unanimously passed the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill 2013.

‘The bill was passed for safeguarding women, children and any other vulnerable person from domestic violence and it had already come into force and would be extended to the whole province of Sindh. The bill was presented by Sindh law minister Muhammad Ayaz Soomro and supported by both the treasury and opposition members. According to the bill, domestic violence was included, but the bill was not limited to acts of gender based and other physical or psychological abuse committed by a respondent against women, children or other vulnerable persons, with whom the respondent was or had been in a domestic relationship.’ **[36b]**

23.123 The Aurat Foundation’s press briefing, ‘Incidents of Violence against Women in Pakistan: Reported during 2011’, undated, cited 610 cases of domestic violence during the reporting period. **[57c]**

23.124 On 12 December 2011, The Express Tribune reported that the Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Bill 2010 was unanimously passed by the Senate. **[92e]**

23.125 The same source added that ‘The purpose of the bill is to control the import, production, transportation, hoarding, sale and use of acid to prevent misuse and provide legal support to acid and burn victims... The amendment in Section 336-B [of the Pakistan Penal Code] states: “Whoever causes hurt by corrosive substance shall be punished with imprisonment for life or imprisonment of either description which shall not be less than fourteen years with a minimum fine of Rs1 million”.’ **[92e]**

23.126 According to the Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF) ‘In 2009, 43 cases were reported to the Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF), Pakistan’s notification unit. Fifty-five cases were reported in 2010, 150 in 2011, and 93 this year [2012]. Many victims remain silent. The conviction rate for acid violence remains as low as 6%...’ (Express Tribune, 3 December 2012) **[92c]** However, as a result of the acid crime laws, convictions had risen to 18 per cent in 2012, as opposed to 6 percent in 2011. (Inter Press Service, 28 June 2013) **[16b]**

23.127 The Aurat Foundation reported 44 cases of acid attacks and 29 cases of stove burning, during 2011. **[57c]**

23.128 The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, third and fourth periodic reports of States parties due in 2007: Pakistan, dated 19 March 2009 that ‘... all burn cases are required to be reported to the nearest Magistrate by the registered medical practitioner designated by Provincial Government and Officer in Charge of a Police Station. The medical practitioner shall record the statement of the burn victim immediately on arrival...’ **[79b] (paragraph 138)**

23.129 An article by IRIN, dated 11 March 2008, stated that ‘Domestic violence is endemic in Pakistan.’ The report noted that in the eight years since the publication of HRW’s [Human Rights Watch] 1999 report on domestic violence in Pakistan, there was little evidence that any major changes had been made in the country. The article quoted a leading lawyer and rights activist as saying ‘Domestic violence is very widespread. It is tied in to the lack of empowerment of women in our society.’ **[41a]**

23.130 The same source noted that:

'At times, the violence inflicted on women takes on truly horrendous forms. The Islamabad-based Progressive Women's Association (PWA), headed by Shahnaz Bukhari, believes up to 4,000 women are burnt each year, almost always by husbands or in-laws, often as "punishment" for minor "offences" or for failure to bring in a sufficient dowry. The PWA said it had collected details of nearly 8,000 such victims from March 1994 to March 2007, from three hospitals in the Rawalpindi-Islamabad area alone... A lack of safe shelters for women victims of domestic violence, limited awareness of the issue and the absence of specific legislation all compound the problem. The result is that thousands of women are victims of severe violence within their homes, with most cases going unreported and the culprits consequently escaping any punishment for their crime.' **[41a]**

23.131 The AHRC Report 2010 noted:

'Women from religious minorities are most common and vulnerable targets of violence: Women from religious minorities are the most frequent victims of violence, particularly sexual violence. Members of religious minorities are regularly assaulted, tortured or murdered and their property and place of worship are ransacked and desecrated. The blasphemy laws understand blasphemy only as an offence against Islam and are used by a criminal nexus between the police, the administration and religious fundamentalists to intimidate Christians, Ahmadis and all religious minorities in Pakistan. Women are disproportionately affected. It is becoming common in rural areas for Muslim fundamentalists to abduct, force into marriage, and forcibly convert women to Islam. Abductions made up nearly 30 percent of all crimes against women in the first half of 2010.' **[52e] (p62)**

23.132 The USSD Report 2012 stated:

'Women who tried to report abuse faced serious challenges. Police and judges were sometimes reluctant to take action in domestic violence cases, viewing them as family problems. Instead of filing charges, police typically responded by encouraging the parties to reconcile. Authorities usually returned abused women to their abusive family members. Women were reluctant to pursue charges because of the stigma attached to divorce and their economic and psychological dependence on relatives. Relatives were hesitant to report abuse due to fear of dishonoring the family.' **[3n] (Section 6)**

See also sub-section: [Assistance available to women](#); Sections: Police: [Torture](#), and: [Prison conditions](#)

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Honour killings

See also Children: [Violence against children](#)

23.133 The IRB in a Response to Information Request (RIR) entitled Pakistan: Honour killings targeting men and women, especially in the northern areas (2001 - 2006), dated 24 January 2007, provided a brief description of the custom and to whom it applied:

'There is an extensive amount of information on honour killings in Pakistan primarily focusing on female victims. Honour killings are described as a custom in which mostly

women and some men are murdered after accusations of sexual infidelity. The killers seek to avenge the shame that victims are accused of bringing to their families. However, even girls and, on a smaller scale, boys are victims of the practice. Honour killings are known by different names depending on the area in Pakistan in which they are practised. In Sindh province they are referred to as karo kari, where karo refers to the “blackened” or dishonoured man and kali [kari] to the “blackened” woman; they are called tora in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), where tor refers to the accused man and tora to the accused woman; kala kali in Punjab province, where kala refers to the accused man and kali refers to the accused woman; and sinyahkari in Balochistan.’ [12e]

23.134 The same source also provided detail about the motivations and justifications for honour killings, and states that such killings:

‘...are often carried out by men who believe their honour has been breached by the sexual misconduct of female family members, even when it is only an allegation. The tribal justice system, for example, makes it incumbent upon husbands and male relatives to restore family honour damaged by allegations of a woman's sexual misdeed, usually by killing the woman and her alleged lover. The NCSW [National Commission on the Status of Women] indicates that it is not just honour killings but all forms of domestic violence that are “frequently intended to punish a woman for a perceived insubordination supposedly impacting on male honour”. The media in Pakistan reports stories indicating that the male companion of the accused female will also be killed in the name of protecting family honour, or for marrying a woman from another tribal group without the consent of her parents, to restore the honour of her tribe.’ [12e]

23.135 The Aurat Foundation provided a glossary of terms in its Annual Report January-December 2010, Violence Against Women in Pakistan: A qualitative review of statistics 2010 (Aurat Foundation Annual Report 2010), published June 2010. The report described an honour killing as:

‘A customary practice where male family members kill female relatives in the name of family “honour” for sexual activity outside marriage, either suspected or forced, even when they have been victims of rape. Often young teenage boys are chosen to perform the crime because their sentences are generally lighter than those for adults. The practice is deeply rooted in patriarchal/tribal traditions where males are looked upon by society as the sole protectors of females; and because of this duty conferred on the man, he has complete control over the female. In case the man’s protection is violated through the perceived immoral behaviour of the woman, the man loses his honour in society, as it is interpreted, as a failure either to protect the woman adequately or to educate her properly.’ [57b] (Global glossary)

23.136 The IRB RIR summarised the motives for honour killings:

- ‘maintain family assets;
- acquire another family's assets;
- prevent women from freely choosing their husband;
- punish women for seeking divorce, having been raped or having disobeyed family wishes;
- seek revenge on an opponent; and
- disguise the murder of another man.’ [12e]

23.137 The IRB continued:

‘Honour killings are reportedly most prevalent in rural areas of Pakistan. In 2004, more than half of all reported honour killings occurred in southern Sindh province, but the practice was also believed to be widespread in Punjab, Balochistan, NWFP and the FATA. However, the HRCP noted an increase in these types of murders in urban areas such as Lahore in 2005. Pakistan's National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) similarly indicates that honour killings take place in urban areas and that some of these cases are committed by the urban elite.’ **[12e]**

23.138 Compared to the honour killings of at least 943 women, including 93 minors in 2011 (HRCP Report 2011) **[27g] (p167)**, the HRCP Report 2012 noted that its media reporting in 2012 documented 913 honour killings of women, including 99 girls. The report added:

‘The number of victims of these attacks was believed to be higher than the figures suggested because of gaps in reporting. Out of the 913 victims of honour killings, at least 604 were killed after being accused of having illicit relations with men, often without any proof; 191 were killed because they had married according to their own choice and against their families’ wishes. The incidents were not confined to the majority faith. At least seven Hindu and six Christian women also fell victim to the crime. The perpetrators of these crimes were usually close relatives. In 202 cases it was brothers of the victim, in 71 cases the father, in 209 the husband, in 61 in-laws, and in 138 cases other close relatives of the victim. Of the victims, at least 16 were raped and 13 gang-raped before being killed.’ **[27b] (p171-172)**

23.139 Between January and December 2011, 705 women were recorded as being killed in so-called “honour” killings and 1,575 were documented as murdered. There were a total of 8,539 recorded cases of violence against women in 2011. (Aurat Foundation, Incidents of Violence Against Women, 2011) **[57c]**

23.140 The Asian Human Rights Commission noted in its report, The State of Human Rights in Pakistan in 2012 (AHRC Report 2012), published 10 December 2012, that ‘Local and national media have reported 215 cases of Karo Kari, the honour killing, from January 1st, 2012 to November 20th, 2012. After analyzing data, a research team, of the NGO Foundation for Research & Community Empowerment (FRCE), has come to conclusion that more than 80 percent of karo-kari killings have taken place only in northern areas of Sindh.’ **[52n] (p9)**

23.141 The Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN), a network of 42 civil society organisations working to foster democratic accountabilities in Pakistan, stated in a press release, published 27 April 2012, based its report on the monitoring of the offices of 78 District Police Officers [DPOs] across Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and Islamabad Capital Territory, in February 2012, that:

‘Cases of honour killings were more widespread in February 2012 as compared to the preceding month – 24 cases being reported in 16 districts against 19 recorded in 12 districts in January ... A total of 793 cases were registered for crimes against women, the report said. Most frequent and widely reported on these were FIRs [First Information Reports] for forced marriage. These constituted 40% of the total cases. Twenty four percent of the cases were those of attack on modesty, rape (19%), offences relating to

marriage (14%), honour killings (3%), and word, gesture or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman (1%).' **[130a]**

23.142 Regarding the recording of honour killings, the Aurat Foundation noted in its 2009 annual report on violence against women, published June 2010, that:

'... it can be safely assumed that all such cases are not reported since perpetrators are mostly family members immediate and extended like a husband, a brother or a cousin. In some cases, women are killed by their spouses suspecting extra-marital relations while in others, they are killed for having chosen their husband rather than accepting the one their family chose for them. Often, "honor" can also be an excuse for a cold-blooded murder. The greatest number of "honor" killings is committed in the "karo-kari" or "kala-kali" tradition. Karo or kala (black man) and kari or kali (black woman) are terms for adulterer and adulteress. A man is entitled to kill his wife and her alleged lover if he declares her "kari" or "kali".' **[57a]**

23.143 In its report, The State of Pakistan's Children 2008 (SPARC Report 2008), the Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) noted that:

'The selective use of religion and patriarchy, which interplay in the institution of the family, and the endorsement of it by the parallel judiciary systems [jirgas] provide a license to men to inflict violence and murder on their spouses/sisters/daughters in the name of honour, not only on the grounds of "illicit relations" but for multiple reasons such as seeking divorce, rape, fake honour killings and to safeguard family property etc... The tribal system of retribution, and the formal legal system, both subject women and girl child to cruel treatment and judgements are passed which are highly unfavourable to women. As state institutions the law enforcement apparatus and the judiciary have dealt with such crimes against women with extraordinary leniency, and as the law provides many loopholes for murderers in the name of honour to get away, the tradition of honour killings continue unabated.' **[71c] (p37)**

23.144 Commenting on the revised laws for honour killings, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child report, dated 19 March 2009, noted that the low level implementation of laws was a problem, which was 'Mostly... due to lack of adequate training to appropriately deal with the situation and apply the relevant provisions of the law.' **[79b] (paragraph 137)**

23.145 The USSD Report 2010 also noted the 2005 law that established penalties for honour killings. However, the report noted that '... human rights groups criticized the act because it allows the victim or the victim's heirs to negotiate physical or monetary restitution with the perpetrator in exchange for dropping charges, known as "qisas" and "diyat"... Because honor crimes generally occurred within families, many went unreported. However, police and NGOs reported that increased media coverage enabled law enforcement to take action against perpetrators.' **[3g] (Section 6)**

23.146 Human Rights Watch noted in their submission to the Human Rights Council, on 5 May 2008, that 'According to Pakistan's Interior Ministry, there have been more than 4,100 "honor killings" since 2001' and also noted that 'provisions of the Qisas and Diyat law which allow the next of kin to "forgive" the murderer in exchange for monetary compensation remain in force, and continue to be used by offenders to escape punishment in cases of so-called honor killings. Such laws which in effect allow men to pay to kill women act as no deterrent to those who would engage in so-called honor killings.' **[7c]**

See also Judiciary: [Qisas and Diyat ordinances](#)

23.147 In a Response to Information Request (RIR) regarding single women, dated 4 December 2007, the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) noted:

‘South Asian Media Net, an independent website providing news, information and analyses covering the South Asian region, indicates the following in its analysis of the situation of women in Pakistan:

‘The social and cultural context of Pakistani society is predominantly patriarchal... Since the notion of male honor and izzat (honor) is linked with women's sexual behaviour, their sexuality is considered a potential threat to the honor of the family. Therefore, women's mobility is strictly restricted and controlled through the system of purdah, sex segregation, and violence against them. The South Asian Media Net adds that because women lack the skills to compete for employment in the public arena, they end up socially and economically dependent towards men. Purdah, which translates to “screen” or “veil,” represents the practice of secluding women from public life by having them wear concealing clothing and by using barriers such as walls, curtains and screens in the home which, as a consequence, has deprived women of economic independence.’
[12j]

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Love marriages

23.148 An article from the Asian Human Rights Commission publication Ethics in Action, dated October 2009, stated:

‘The issue of love marriages is highly contentious in Pakistan, a traditionally patriarchal and feudal-based society. According to prevalent social and cultural norms, women are objects under the control and protection of male family members. Their rights and freedoms are severely restricted. Such a society sees marriage as a trade or business deal between different families. The idea of women choosing their own marriage partners is considered outrageous and unacceptable behavior.’ [52i]

23.149 The article added:

‘It is common for legal authorities, particularly the police to mishandle cases involving love marriages or other “family issues” For this reason, violence against women in Pakistan (including violence against women in love marriages) remains very high. Furthermore, the country’s social infrastructure and institutions are largely operated and staffed by men, most of whom carry various cultural and gender biases. Cases involving women – whether at police stations or in the court system – are inevitably prejudiced, prone to violence, and illegal. A pregnant woman in Punjab province for instance, was severely beaten by the police in August 2007 for secretly marrying and living with a man despite her parents having already chosen her bridegroom. Her husband was falsely charged with her abduction, while she was “punished” by being raped by her intended bridegroom.’ [52i]

23.150 The same source cited other examples of families that were moved to use violence in opposing love marriages, including kidnapping their daughters, attacking the relatives of the males in a relationship and obtaining help from police to track down partners who marry without family approval. [52i]

23.151 The Australian Government Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT), Country Advice Pakistan, on love marriages, dated 17 November 2010, quoted Dr Shakira Hussein, a fellow at the Australian National University, as saying, in December 2009:

‘Arranged marriages within a person’s own ethnic community tend to be the norm. This is very much the case across Pakistan as a whole. Western observers are often surprised to discover that affluent urban Pakistani families (who may otherwise seem outwardly no different to a Western family in their dress and behaviours) will nonetheless still expect their children to meet the expectation of entering into an arranged marriage with a partner from their own ethnic community... Moreover, love marriages which transgress family expectations can result in considerable family pressure being brought to bear. Again, violence could be a part of such pressure. In instances where the male partner to the marriage was from an ill-regarded community or caste then he, as much as the female partner to the marriage, could likely find himself the subject of a violent reprisal.’ **[134a] (p1-2)**

23.152 The RRT also noted ‘Multiple sources indicate that parties to love marriages have been subjected to significant pressures, threats, and violence from their families. The most extreme example of harm against parties entering into a love marriage is the act of honour killing. An honour killing is the culturally acceptable murder of a woman who marries without consent or who refuses to marry a chosen partner.’ **[134a] (p2)**

23.153 The RRT further noted that Dr Shakira Hussein ‘... advised that love marriage partners may be pressured or pursued by police acting on behalf of disapproving family members. She also advised that the legal system did not offer much recourse or restitution. She stated:

‘...above it could not be guaranteed that police would assist a couple who were being threatened by family members in such instances. It is just as likely that local police would assist the family in asserting pressure on the transgressing couple rather than offering effective protection to them.

‘There have been some cases where higher courts have ruled in favour of couples in such predicaments in recent years but it should be noted that the progression of such a case to higher courts can take years and, in most cases, the offending couple will not have the opportunity or the means to argue their case in this way. The statistics associated with honour killing indicate the extent to which numerous individuals are never able to survive family reprisals. Moreover, in the lower courts...such killings may be forgiven, or subject to little punishment or a financial settlement, if such is the choice of the murdered victim’s family.’ **[134a] (p4-5)**

23.154 An article published in the Duke Journal of Gender Law and Policy, ‘What’s the Constitution Got to Do With It? Regulating Marriage In Pakistan’, dated August 2009, stated:

‘Despite the judicial vindication of womens’ right to marry, traditional perceptions of honor still severely limit some of the most basic rights of women. Regrettably, many “love marriages” who disregarded their families’ wishes find themselves subject to harassment by the Pakistani police, who raid and search their homes, arrest them, and may even charge them with “pre”- marital sex – a severe offense under the infamous Zina Ordinance criminalizing adultery and fornication. The police may even go so far as to harass the husband’s family members to pressure him to divorce his wife. One such case reached the Pakistani court system. The Court enlisted the constitutional

protection accorded to marriage in condemnation of the officers, viewing their behavior as based on tribal customs, social taboos, and barbarity.’ **[135a] (p359)**

23.155 The same source added:

‘... the Pakistani courts have generally recognized and respected women’s basic Islamic and constitutional freedom to exercise choice in marriage. They have developed and implemented various techniques – invalidating forced unions, quashing criminal charges, issuing restraining orders, penalizing police officers, and rejecting compromises and the honor killing defense – all in order to preserve the sanctity of the right to marry. But there is a limit to the judiciary’s ability to uphold the Constitution unaided. While courts have interpreted laws in the spirit of the Constitution and guided state functionaries to safeguard marriage, the Pakistani legislature has largely failed to translate constitutional guarantees from rhetoric into reality. The legislature has remained oblivious to customary practices, hindering the actualization of women’s right to marry, and thus also to constitutional rights.’ **[135a] (p364)**

See also Social and economic rights: [Marriage](#)

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Rape

See subsections on the [Women’s Protection Act](#) and Section: Judiciary: [Hudood Ordinances](#) for changes on legislation with regard to rape; also see subsection above: [Honour killings](#)

23.156 The USSD Report 2012 stated that ‘There were no reliable national, provincial, or local statistics on rape due to underreporting and the lack of any centralized law enforcement data collection system.’ **[3n] (Section 6)** However, the HRCP Report 2010 stated that:

‘According to statistics provided by the police departments in the four provinces, cases of rape of 2,903 women, nearly eight women a day, were reported to the police. These included at least 51 cases of gang rape. Official figures for rape from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa could not be ascertained but according to police statistics at least 52 women had been abducted in the province. In the province of Sindh there were 239 cases of rape and 50 cases of gang rape. There were 161 incidents of Karo Kari as well. In Balochistan, police figures suggested that there were 32 cases of rape and one gang rape. There were 23 incidents of Karo Kari/Siyah Kari. In Punjab 2,581 cases of rape were reported to the police. These figures were believed to be only a fraction of the actual problem as cases are often not reported or are hushed up.’ **[27e] (p207)**

23.157 The AHRC Report 2012 stated that:

‘Investigations on rape and other forms of violence against women are often faulty and intentionally carried out with feebleness. Police are also reluctant to file cases, as often those responsible of the reported crimes are influential people. Therefore, victims are “invited” to withdraw their complaint under the suggestion of settlement offers. Furthermore, many times it is also the case of police officers who accept bribes from the accused parties in order to highly discourage victims to report violence. In doing so, they become themselves big culprits of the offense... **(p82)**

‘For a woman who has been raped, it is mainly the case of proving her innocence, rather than being listened to and being in the position to discuss the state’s evidence. Laws are made by men, police officers are men, and Courts are mainly made up by men. Many judges tend to adopt sexist behaviors during trials, for instance by requiring the victims to provide the Court intimate details about the way in which the sexual harassment was conducted. Such lack of delicacy and empathy, regarding the violation of women’s rights, leads to double humiliation and disgrace for victims. Judges, police staff members and other public officials definitely need to be sensitized on gender issues, through gender-sensitive training, better education and awareness programs.’ **[52n] (p85)**

23.158 The Aurat Foundation’s ‘Incidents of Violence against Women in Pakistan Reported during 2011’, undated, reported 827 cases of rape/gang rape in 2011, compared to 928 in 2010. **[57c]**

23.159 The Freedom House Freedom in the World 2013 – Pakistan report observed that:

‘Traditional norms, discriminatory laws, and weak policing contribute to a high incidence of rape, domestic abuse, and other forms of violence – including acid attacks – against women. According to the HRCP, up to 80 percent of women are victims of such abuse during their lifetimes. Female victims of sexual crimes are often pressured by police not to file charges, and they are sometimes urged by their families to commit suicide. Gang rapes sanctioned by village councils to punish the targeted woman's relatives continue to be reported, even though perpetrators in some cases have received harsh sentences. The 2006 Women’s Protection Act requires judges to try rape cases under criminal law rather than Sharia. However, extramarital sex is still criminalized, and spousal rape is not recognized as a crime.’ **[5a]**

See also subsection [Honour killings](#)

23.160 The HRCP Report 2008 reported that:

‘Several panchayats and jirgas gave verdicts in 2008 where female relatives of the “accused” were ordered to be raped by the “victim’s” party. Women and girls were also raped in revenge for seeking divorce, refusing marriage proposals, marrying of their own choice, defying cultural norms, and for many other efforts at independent-decision-making. Numerous cases were observed where girls were raped by their own fathers and other close family members and married women were molested by their in-laws. Women were also sexually harassed at work, a majority of whom were domestic help. Reports of girls being raped by teachers and at madrassahs were also received. A shocking trend of filming rape has also emerged and in many cases it was reported that the films were used to blackmail the victim for more sexual exploitation or money or the videos were sold on the black market. Several arrests were also made in this context bringing this aspect of the crime on the radar of law enforcement agencies.’ **[27a] (p124)**

23.161 The USSD Report 2012 noted that:

‘Rape is a criminal offense, with punishment that ranges from a minimum of 10 to 25 years in prison and a fine to the death penalty. The penalty for gang rape is either death or life imprisonment, but in practice sentences were often less severe. Although rape was frequent, prosecutions were rare. Spousal rape is not a crime under the penal code.

'As in previous years, the government's enforcement of the Women's Protection Act of 2006 was poor. The act brought the crime of rape under the jurisdiction of criminal rather than Islamic courts. In cases of rape, by law police are not allowed to arrest or hold a woman overnight at a police station without a civil court judge's consent. The law requires a complaint to be made directly to a sessions court, a trial court for heinous offences. After recording the victim's statement, the sessions court judge officially lodges a complaint, after which police can then make arrests. While this procedure was meant to eliminate abuses relating to social norms that make it difficult for women to seek legal redress with police, NGOs reported that it created other barriers for rape victims who could not afford to travel to the courts or access the courts. Rape continued to be a severely underreported crime due to societal taboos that prevented persons from speaking about it.' **[3n] (Section 6)**

23.162 The same source added that, according to the Aurat Foundation:

'... prosecutions of reported rapes were rare. Police and NGOs reported that false rape charges sometimes were filed in different types of disputes, reducing the ability of police to assess real cases and proceed with prosecution. NGOs reported that police were at times implicated in rape cases. NGOs also alleged that police sometimes abused or threatened victims, demanding that they drop charges, especially when police received bribes from suspected perpetrators. Some police demanded bribes from some victims before registering rape charges, and investigations were sometimes superficial. While the use of post-rape medical testing increased during the year, medical personnel in many areas did not have sufficient training or equipment, which further complicated prosecutions. Extrajudicial resolutions to rape accusations were common, with a victim often forced to marry her attacker.' **[3n] (Section 6)**

See also subsection: [Women's Protection Act](#)

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Assistance available to women

23.163 Shirkat Gah – Women's Resource Centre, Pakistan, made a 'Stakeholders Joint Submission for Pakistan's Review in The Human Rights Council -14th Session, October 2012' (Shirkat Gah Stakeholders Joint Submission), undated, accessed 8 May 2012, in which it stated:

'Support structures for dealing with victims of violence are limited and under resourced. There are currently only 44 Government run women's shelters in a population of 177.10 million (of which women are estimated to be 48-50%). Till 2010, 23 women's emergency crisis support centers augmented services to survivors of violence. Following the devolution of the crisis centers for women established by the Federal Government to the Provincial Governments under the 18th Constitutional Amendment, the Punjab Government has refused to adopt twelve such functional centers, replacing them instead with crisis support desks that only serve as referral mechanisms. Other Provinces have adopted Women's Crisis Centers but have failed to provide adequate and timely budgetary allocations to these centers thereby sending a message that women's issues occupy low priority in Government budgets. There are currently only 3 recognized Government Burn Units in civil hospitals in Pakistan and 3 Burn Units in military hospitals. While some District hospitals provide burn treatment, they are poorly equipped to handle serious cases, especially those arising from acid violence. Many

patients are denied treatment because of a lack of burn units in major public hospitals.’
[132a] (p4-5)

- 23.164 Providing information on assistance available to women victims of domestic violence, dated 14 January 2013, the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) cited correspondence with a human rights activist and representative of Shirkat Gah, who stated that, in their opinion, there should be more shelters for women, noting also that shelter for women and their children was offered for ‘at least three months’. **[12u] (5. Shelters)**
- 23.165 The IRB response of 14 January 2013 also noted that a representative from the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) ‘...indicated that NGO-run shelters are “better” than government-run shelters...’ The IRB response added that there were reports of abuse at some women’s shelters, and that some women were prohibited from leaving the shelter premises, particularly if they had been sent there by court-order. **[12u] (5. Shelters)**

- 23.166 The IRB response continued:

‘The representative of Shirkat Gah indicated that women in shelters live in “miserable conditions”... The HRCP representative similarly stated that government-run shelters are overcrowded, and added that they are old, not well-maintained, and do not have either proper facilities or adequately trained staff... He said that women are afraid to go to government-run shelters and prefer NGO-run shelters...

‘Sources indicate that shelters, both government and NGO-run, try to reconcile victims with the perpetrator of domestic violence... According to the Shirkat Gah representative, this occurs “sometimes,” as managers of shelters often believe that it is “safer” for women to go home... She added that, depending on the nature of the case, such reconciliation attempts are also made at Dastak and Panah [NGO-run shelters in Lahore and Karachi respectively]... Approximately 70 percent of the women that have stayed at Dastak reportedly return to their families after “mediation”... Panah's website indicates that they assess the viability of reintegrating victims, including through mediation with their families... According to the HRCP representative, reconciliation attempts are made by shelters because it is “next to impossible” for a single woman to live alone in Pakistan due to prejudices against women and economic dependence...’
[12u] (5. Shelters)

See also subsection [Single women](#)

- 23.167 In a response, dated 26 November 2009, on Resources available to female victims of violence in Karachi, Islamabad and Lahore, the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) noted that:

‘The South Manchester Law Centre (SMLC), in partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University, published a January 2008 report that evaluated the services available to female victims of violence in Pakistan and indicated the following in regard to crisis centres in Pakistan:

‘A crisis centre is the first stage of contact for a woman before admission to a shelter. Crisis centres play a crucial role in assessing a woman's needs and the risks she faces. A woman is never turned away without full assessment of her case. If necessary, immediate action is taken to protect her. Lawyers, advice workers and counsellors are

available to offer immediate support to women at the centres. After the initial assessment the woman is then referred to a shelter...

'The SMLC report also states that when a woman is accepted into a shelter, shelter staff will immediately inform the woman's family... Additionally, the report indicates that crisis centre staff assist women with "mediation and reconciliation"...' [12n]

23.168 The same source noted that:

'The 2008 SMLC report offers the following summary of shelters in Pakistan: shelters for women are seen as a temporary refuge where they can stay until their problems are resolved. This could be in the form of reconciliation, re-marriage or divorce. There is no provision for aftercare work or rehabilitation except for one refuge in Karachi that actively assists women with rehabilitation. This is done in the form of finding work, re-housing and giving financial assistance for a short-term period...' [12n]

23.169 The IRB response continued:

'The report indicates that, in general, the lack of follow-up work is of "particular concern, because once women have reconciled or are forced to return to their husbands, no contact is maintained with them"... Additionally, the SMLC report indicates that both government-run and private shelters do not admit boys over the age of 5 years with their mothers, whereas previously boys were admitted into shelters until the age of 11 years... Shirkat Gah's legal department states that male children 10 years of age and older are not permitted to reside with their mothers in government or private shelters...' [12n]

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Government Assistance

23.170 On 6 August 2012 the UN General Assembly reproduced Pakistan's 'National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21', for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated:

'Besides taking legal measures to provide protection to women, a number of new administrative measures have been taken. These include:

- 'At the direction of the Supreme Court, the High Courts and the Bar Associations have set up legal aid committees to help women victims in cases of vani and swara.
- The Women in Distress and Detention Fund was made functional in 2012 to extend financial and legal assistance to women in jail and to other destitute women.
- Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Centers for Women have been set up to provide immediate relief to female victims of violence. Each Centre has a management committee which includes representatives from the civil society. The centers have panels of lawyers at their disposal to assist women in need of legal aid.
- Dar-ul-Amaans provide protection and shelter to women in distress. Services offered include: health and vocational training, to women under the supervision of trained sociologists and psychologists.

- To facilitate women, eleven exclusive women police stations are working in the four provinces and the federal capital. These are in addition to regular police stations where there is increased emphasis on gender sensitivity.
- Gender issues are now integrated into the curriculum of training institutes for judiciary, police and other government officials.
- A Gender Crime Centre functions in the National Police Bureau (NPB). Programmes developed by the Centre have been included in police training institutes.' **[83b] (paragraph 47)**

23.171 With regard to the availability of centres to assist women, the USSD Report 2012 commented that:

'The government operated the Crisis Center for Women in Distress, which referred abused women to NGOs for assistance. A total of 26 government-funded Shaheed Benazir Bhutto centers for women across the country provided women with temporary shelter, legal aid, medical treatment, and psychosocial counseling. These centers served women who were victims of exploitation and violence. Victims later were referred to a "darul aman" or a shelter house (approximately 200 centers for women and children who were victims were established with funds from the Provincial Women Development Department). These centers provided shelter, access to medical treatment, limited legal representation, and some vocational training. Many government centers were full beyond capacity and lacked sufficient staff and resources. In some cases women were abused at the government-run shelters, found their movements severely restricted, or were pressured to return to their abusers.' **[3n] (Section 6)**

23.172 The same source noted 'Police in Sindh established karo-kari cells with a toll-free telephone number in the districts of Sukkur, Ghotki, Khairpur, and Nausharo Feroze for persons to report karo-kari incidents. Because honor crimes generally occurred within families, many went unreported. However, police and NGOs reported that increased media coverage enabled law enforcement to take some action against a limited number of perpetrators.' **[3n] (Section 6)**

23.173 The Express Tribune reported on 23 June 2011 that the Punjab Government had not allocated funds to its provinces Benazir Bhutto Women's Crisis Centres, claiming that '...there is already a network of public darul amans (shelters) in the province and so the centres, which are run in partnerships with NGOs, are not needed.' The report added:

'The crisis centres provide services to women not available at darul amans, said prominent women at a press conference at the Lahore Press Club. "These centres are as important as the 1122 service," said Justice (retired) Nasira Javid Iqbal. 'They provide psychological and medical aid, relocation and counselling'...

'MPA Amna Ulfat of the PML-Quaid said that the government-run women's shelters were inadequate. "There is nothing in darul amans for homeless women. Saying that they are enough is very disturbing to women," she said.' **[92g]**

23.174 An article published by the Inter Press Service News Agency dated 8 March 2007 reported on help centres to assist women and stated 'Considering that Pakistan is a country where violence against women is all pervasive, one should find a flurry of activity at the women's centres – of the phone ringing incessantly, of psychiatrists attending to battered women and of lawyers preparing briefs. Instead the centres are deserted.' In commenting on the centre in Karachi the article continued, quoting a

lawyer working for a local NGO that the lack of women attending the centre was down to poor commitment, co-ordination and a lack of guidelines. Additionally the centre lacked resources to provide basic services, like food and toiletries. The article also observed that of the four centres in the province of Sindh, the Karachi centre was the only one functioning. [16]

23.175 Following correspondence with a representative of Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Centre, the IRB noted in a Response to Information Request on single women living alone, dated 4 December 2007, that:

'...women always have to face criticism by the society and survival for single woman not having support from the family becomes toughest. This complexity coupled with the lack of information and access to State support institutions have intertwined to suppress women from taking steps for themselves. At governmental level there does not exist community social support centres thus resulting in confining women to abusive relationships lacking ability to resist violations... Government run shelters lack appropriate measures as they aim at providing temporary stay and also there have not been any policy measures for rehabilitation of these women when the duration of stay expires.' [12j]

23.176 The same source noted, with regards to women moving from rural to urban areas to find employment, that 'They [the women] face a number of challenges including lack of working women hostels, procedural complications in getting admission and negative societal attitudes towards these women hostel[s]. In Lahore (second largest city of Pakistan) alone where government estimates now put the population at somewhere around 10 million, there are only two working women hostels and very few private ones.' [12j]

Women's police stations

23.177 The USSD Report 2012 noted:

'To address societal norms that disapproved of victims who reported gender-based violence and abuse, the government established women's police stations, staffed by female officers, to offer women a safe haven where they could safely report complaints and file charges. Men are also able to utilize these police stations. Women's police stations continued to struggle with understaffing and limited equipment. Training for female police officers and changing cultural assumptions of male police officers also remained challenges. Due to restrictions on women's mobility and social pressures related to women's public presence, utilization of women's police centers was limited, but NGOs and officials reported that use was growing and that more centers were needed.' [3n] (Section 6)

23.178 On 13 October 2012, the Daily Times reported on a survey on women police in Pakistan, and noted that:

'There are 19 women police stations in the country, including seven in Gilgit-Baltistan, three in Punjab, six in Sindh, two in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and one in Islamabad. There is no woman police station in Balochistan. There are 3,700 women police personnel working across the country, which is less than one percent of the total police force.'

Women police stations have also proved ineffective so far, as most of the police stations across the country have just registered one or two cases in 10 to 15 years.’ [55j]

23.179 The IRB noted in its response dated 14 January 2013, regarding support for women victims of domestic violence, that sources differed on the number of women police stations in Pakistan, ranging from nine to 19. The IRB also noted that according to a representative of the HRCP, women police stations were ‘not very effective’, too few and therefore difficult to access. The IRB provided the following information on women’s police stations in provinces:

‘The Punjab police indicate that “full-fledged women police stations” exist in Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Faisalabad... The Punjab police indicate that these stations help female victims of crime and domestic violence, and provide legal advice and counselling to women... The Capital City Police Lahore indicate that the women's police station in Lahore was established in 1995... The Capital City Police Lahore also indicate that, although female officers are authorized to register and investigate cases in the women's police station, female police officers are not active investigation officers in police stations outside of the women's police station...

‘The Islamabad Capital Territory Police indicate that they inaugurated their women's police station in 1994... They also indicate that this police station conducts all police work, but that it is the only station with female staff... According to the Islamabad Capital Territory Police, the women's police station is successful in handing cases “concerning female felons”... The Islamabad Capital Territory Police state that women's police stations have been created to avoid the misbehaviour of male police officers towards female prisoners, and that Pakistani women are joining the police force to protect women from the violence and harassment that they face in police stations...

‘The Lahore police indicate that there are women complaint centres in Gulberg, Muslim Town, Lower Mall, and Race Course Road, all of which are staffed with female police officers... APP reports that ladies complaint units have been set up in two police stations in Islamabad... The Sindh government indicated on its website plans for the fiscal year 2010-11 to create women complaint cells in Karachi, Sukkur, Larkana, Hyderabad, and Shaheed Benazirabad... These complaint cells were being set up for the “appropriate and timely disposal of complaints and speedy access to justice” and to provide medical and legal aid... The Sindh Minister of Women Development was reported in February 2012 as saying that five centres had been set up...’ [12u] **(3.2 Women’s police stations)**

23.180 The IRB’s response, ‘Resources available to female victims of violence in Karachi, Islamabad and Lahore’, noted that they were provided with the following information, on women’s police stations, from Shirkat Gah, a women’s resource centre, on 20 November 2009:

‘The Women's Police Station faces many problems; they have only one vehicle for use with a very limited petrol allowance, they are understaffed and overburdened, and they have been granted less authority than their male counterparts; for example, they cannot register an FIR without the prior approval of the Deputy Superintendent of Police and Superintendent of Police. Even if the case has been registered the following investigation remains problematic. The investigation requires visiting the area of incidence, collecting evidence and arresting the accused, but lack of resources such as staff and transport make the task extremely challenging. No special treatment is

afforded to female victims of violence, nor is any modern equipment made available to facilitate addressing their grievances.’ [12n]

See also Security forces: [Police](#)

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Non-governmental organisation (NGO) assistance

23.181 The USSD Report 2009 stated that ‘Numerous women's rights NGOs such as the Progressive Women's Association, Sehar, [Struggle for Change](#), [War against Rape](#), and [Aurat Foundation](#) were active in urban areas. Their primary concerns included domestic violence and honor crimes.’ [3b] (Section 6)

23.182 In its response dated 14 January 2013, the IRB cited information from sources on two women’s shelters: Dastak, in Lahore, and Panah, in Karachi. The response noted:

‘The Shirkat Gah representative indicated that the [shelter] in Lahore, Dastak, is privately owned... According to Cause of Death: Woman, an investigative project of the Swedish Association of Women's Shelters and Young Women's Empowerment Centres, which examined the situation of violence against women in 10 countries between 2010 and 2012..., Dastak accommodates 25 women and 45 children, but at times has housed 70 women and their children, as “no one is turned away”... Cause of Death: Woman also reports that most women stay at Dastak for at least three months, although some have stayed for several years... Dastak is reportedly protected by armed guards...

‘Panah has both private and public ownership... Panah houses 40-45 women and children... and has 10 bedrooms with 31 beds and 4 cribs... In 2008, 60 percent of the women that stayed at Panah went there through a court order, while 25 percent were sent by NGOs, 10 percent by lawyers, and 5 percent by the police... In 2010, Panah reported that it provided shelter and rehabilitation services to 229 women and 82 accompanying children for periods ranging from a few weeks to several months... According to the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting, a not-for-profit journalism organization that supports independent international journalism..., women are allowed to stay at Panah for three months and it is not a “permanent home”... Panah has “strict security,” and provides a variety of services such as legal and medical aid...

‘According to the representative of Shirkat Gah, these two shelter homes are in “good condition,”...’ [12u] (5. Shelters)

23.183 Bedari, an NGO working for the protection and promotion of women’s and girl’s rights, website accessed 3 June 2013, stated that it provided ‘... support to women survivors of violence through psychological counseling, legal aid and by referring them to other services such as hospitals and Shelters. Bedari advertises this program through various means so that more and more women can get benefit from this program. Bedari is now establishing offices in rural districts of Pakistan such as Chakwal in Punjab province, Mansehra in NWFP and Muzaffarabad in Kashmir.’ [131a]

23.184 The IRB’s Response to Information Request on Resources available to female victims of violence in Karachi, Islamabad and Lahore, dated 26 November 2009, reported:

‘Describing the conditions of NGO services for female victims of violence in general terms, the SMLC report indicates that while some of the NGOs researched are

experienced in dealing with women's issues, many NGOs located in urban centres are under resourced and have to limit the assistance offered... With respect to legal assistance offered by a small number of NGOs and law firms in urban centres of Pakistan, Shirkat Gah's legal department indicated that "the number of women they are able to assist is very small in proportion to the number in need" ...' [12n]

23.185 The same source noted that:

'The SMLC report provides details on the specific provisions offered by an internationally funded shelter, called Dastak, and a privately funded shelter, called Edhi, that both operate in Lahore... In addition to providing food and shelter, women staying at Dastak and Edhi can access free legal representation... The report also describes the services offered at an NGO shelter in Karachi, called Pannah, which also provides food and legal assistance... Additionally, both Edhi and Pannah offer free medical treatment...

'The SMLC reports that women can stay at Dastak for three months, whereas the Edhi shelter does not have a limit on the duration of accommodations... The report also indicates that staff at most shelters encourage women to reconcile with their partners, "because of the generally held view that women cannot survive without men in Pakistan" ...' [12n]

23.186 The HRCP Report 2008 noted that 'Private shelters continued to run and provide refuge as well as rehabilitation services allowed by their resources and outreach. Nevertheless, these facilities were small-scaled [sic], few and far between and relatively unknown to the masses which brought out the need for maximum government input and action.' [27a] (p128, Women: Shelter for women)

23.187 The website Madadgaar, undated, accessed 24 June 2013, provided details of its Helpline for women and children, and stated 'Madadgaar Helpline provides telephonic counseling, face to face counseling to walk-in survivors, crisis intervention, guidance, legal advises and legal aid and referral services to children and women.' [68]

See also Sections [Trafficking](#), and [Human Rights Institutions, Organisations and Activists](#)

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Women's health

See also Children: [Health and welfare](#)

23.188 In its 'Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Pakistan', dated 1 March 2013, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women were concerned about:

'... the high maternal mortality rate in the State party, women's lack of adequate access to family planning services, including contraceptives, restrictive abortion laws and the large number of women resorting to unsafe abortions as well as the lack of adequate post-abortion care services. It is further concerned at the wide privatization of the health system and inadequate budget allocated to the health sector, in particular with

regard to sexual and reproductive health care services, especially in rural remote areas.’ **[79g] (paragraph 31)**

- 23.189 On 13 August 2012, the UN General Assembly published a summarised ‘Compilation [of reports] prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/2 – Pakistan’ for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated:

‘UNCT [United Nations Country Team] stated that approximately 1 in 89 women in Pakistan will die of maternal causes. WHO [World Health Organization] noted that nearly 11,000 women and girls die annually while giving birth. CRC [Committee on the Rights of the Child] remained concerned at the lack of access to sexual and reproductive health counselling and services and at the link between the high rate of abortion and low contraceptive use. It noted with concern that clandestine abortion was a major cause of maternal mortality.’ **(paragraph 54)** ‘Women’s limited access to health care and behaviours which result in women not seeking health care are also of concern.’ **[83c] (paragraph 56)**

- 23.190 Save the Children stated in its ‘State of the World’s Mothers 2012’ report, published May 2012, that maternal mortality dropped by nearly half in the period 1990-2008. The report also noted:

‘Pakistan began training and deploying “Lady Health Workers” in 1994. There are now more than 90,000 female health workers throughout the country, serving 70 percent of the rural population. Lady Health Workers focus largely on essential maternal and newborn care. Their training emphasizes maternal nutrition, iron and folate use, rest during pregnancy and promotion of breastfeeding. Each Lady Health Worker looks after a population of about 1,000 individuals. At group meetings, she will discuss issues related to better health, hygiene, nutrition, sanitation and family planning, emphasizing their benefits towards improved quality of life. In household visits, she will treat iron deficiency anemia in women and young children, and provide nutritional education with emphasis on breastfeeding and complementary feeding practices, and maternal nutrition, including ways to reduce micronutrient malnutrition.’ **[133a] (p36)**

- 23.191 UNICEF’s National Report 2012: Pakistan – Situation Analysis of children and women in Pakistan, dated June 2012, stated:

‘The overall Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) for Pakistan is 280 deaths per 100,000 live births, according to UNICEF, or 276 per 100,000 according to the 2006-07 DHS. In rural areas the ratio is 319 per 100,000, more than 80 per cent higher than the ratio of 175 per hundred thousand found in urban areas, where a continuum of antenatal care and assisted delivery is more likely to be available... Overall, one in every 89 Pakistani women will die due to causes related to childbirth. This compared to 1 in 8,000 in the developed world.’ **[72b] (p48, section 5.3)**

- 23.192 The HRCP Report 2012 stated ‘The infant mortality rate at 63 deaths per 1,000 live births and the under-five year mortality rate at 86.5 per 1,000 children remain serious concerns. The high mortality figures are largely due to poor diet, water-borne diseases and malnutrition.’ **[27b] (p234-235)**

- 23.193 UNICEF noted in its National Report 2012: Pakistan, that

'A national MNCH [Maternal and newborn child health] programme has been developed to fill gaps in maternal and child health care by training and deploying 12,000 community midwives, particularly in rural areas, to increase the skilled birth attendance rate... In addition it is upgrading 112 District Headquarters (DHQ) and 122 Tehsil Headquarters (THQ) hospitals in the country to provide full emergency obstetric and neonatal care services, and another 15 DHQ and 48 THQ hospitals and 599 rural health centres (RHCs) and civil hospitals to provide basic EmONC [Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care] services.' **[72b] (p49, section 5.3.1)**

- 23.194 Responding to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Pakistan Government reported on 12 August 2009 that over 4,500 Community Midwives (CMW) students were under training across Punjab, Sindh, NWFP and Balochistan. **[79a] (p8)**
- 23.195 The HRCP Report 2008 noted in its section on health that 'In 2008... no female doctors were available in FATA [Federally Administered Tribal Areas] hospitals, which was a crucial problem for women in the area as many of them refused or were prevented from seeing a male doctor.' **[27a] (p172, Health: Public hospitals)**
- 23.196 The HRCP Report 2012 cited, from media reporting, at least 626 cases of female suicide. **[27b] (p236)** The Aurat Foundation recorded 633 suicides of women in 2010 and 758 in 2011, in its 'Incidents of Violence against Women in Pakistan Reported during 2011', (undated.) **[57c]**

See also Section: [Medical issues](#)

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24. Children

Overview

- 24.01 The Pakistan Overview on the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) website, accessed 26 June 2013, summarised the position of children in Pakistan:

'Children in Pakistan face a variety of serious challenges ranging from malnutrition and poor access to education and health facilities to exploitation in the form of child labour. Their low status in society can leave them victim to daily violence at home and in school as well as to organised trafficking and sexual exploitation. Girls are specially affected as conservative attitudes may impede them attending or finishing school. Recent natural disasters have increased the vulnerability of thousands of children.' **[72a] (Background)**

- 24.02 The same source indicated that children face considerable difficulties in Pakistan. It observed that:

'One in ten children does not survive their fifth birthday... Thirty per cent of children are chronically malnourished and lack safe water and household sanitation, especially in rural areas. Pakistan spends less than 2.5 per cent of its GDP [Gross Domestic Product] on the education sector. Just over half of the 19 million children of primary school going age are enrolled in primary education. Compared to 58 per cent of boys, there are 48 per cent of girls enrolled in primary school. Just over a third of Pakistani

women are literate. An estimated 3.6 million children under the age of 14 work, mostly in exploitative and hazardous labour.’ **[72a] (Background)**

- 24.03 The UNICEF Pakistan Annual Report 2011, published 2012, noted some positive achievements affecting children, which included:

‘More than 5.13 million children were immunised against measles... Nearly 33 million children were vaccinated [against polio] during the year... The Water, Sanitation and Hygiene programme provided safe drinking water to 4.8 million people, 2.4 million of them children. A total of 3.5 million people, half of them children, received access to safe sanitation... About 1.6 million children received health screening and deworming treatment through the School Health Programme... Article 25A of the 18th Amendment to the Constitution affirmed free primary education for every child, a big step forward for the one in ten Pakistani children not currently in school.’ **[72c] (Foreward)**

See subsection [Health and welfare](#) and [Education](#)

- 24.04 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its annual report, the ‘State of Human Rights in 2012’ (HRCP Report 2012), published March 2013, that:

‘Protection of child rights yet again did not appear to be a priority for the government in 2012 and, despite several promises and positive projections for the year, the incidence of child rights violations remained essentially unchanged. Recommendations made to Pakistan by the Human Rights Council and Committee on the Rights of the Child at the UN Universal Periodic Review (2008-2012) for the country indicated that Pakistan had seriously lagged in its commitments to child rights as more than half of the recommendations pertained to child rights. Situational Analysis of Women and Children in Pakistan 2012 by UNICEF also painted a very dismal child rights situation in the country.’ **[27b] (p178)**

- 24.05 The Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) noted in its report ‘The State of Pakistan’s Children 2012’ (SPARC Report 2012), published May 2013, that:

‘In 2012, negligible efforts were made towards instituting a comprehensive legal framework which can provide protection to children against child labour and various forms of violence, abuse and exploitation. In this regard, the government failed to adopt a number of bills that were directly related to child protection and child welfare... Furthermore, the existing laws on child rights remained poorly implemented because of weak administration and inadequate budgetary allocations.’ **[71a] (p iii – Introduction)**

- 24.06 The UNICEF Pakistan Annual Report 2011, published 2012, stated ‘In many areas of Pakistan, children are rarely registered at birth. The consequences of this may last a lifetime, because as children and even as adults, women face severe challenges in gaining the protections and services due to them. Once again, there are significant geographical and socioeconomic disparities; in Balochistan province, registration rates are as low as 0.8 per cent, compared to 77 per cent in Punjab province.’ **[72c] (p42)**

See also [Women](#)

- 24.07 Pakistan signed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) on 20 September 1990 and it was ratified on 12 November 1990. It entered into force on 12 December 1990. At the time of ratification, Pakistan made a reservation that the provisions of the UNCRC would be interpreted according to the principles of Islamic

Laws and values, although this reservation was subsequently withdrawn. On 26 September 2001, Pakistan signed the Optional Protocol to the UNCRC on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, which was ratified on 5 July 2011, and Optional Protocol on Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, which has yet to be ratified. (UN Human Rights, accessed 12 November 2012) **[79d] (Status of Ratifications)**

Basic legal information

24.08 The following gives an overview of Pakistan's minimum age requirements:

- Section 2 (a), Chapter 1, of The Offence of Zina (Enforcement of Hudood) Ordinance, 1979, states that an '... "adult" means a person who has attained, being a male, the age of eighteen years or, being a female, the age of sixteen years, or has attained puberty.' **[21b]**
- Voting age: 18 years old. (CIA World Factbook, 16 April 2013, accessed 1 May 2013) **[4a] (Government; Suffrage)**
- Marriage: 18 years old for males and 16 for females. (USSD Report 2012) **[3n] (Section 6)**
- Under Muslim Personal Law '...if the girl has attained puberty and marries with an adult male with her own free will, the marriage is valid... in Pakistan a girl usually reaches puberty at the age of 13.' (Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child report, The State of Pakistan's Children 2008 – SPARC Report 2008) **[71c] (p44)**
- Minimum employment age: no minimum age for non-hazardous occupations. It is illegal to employ children under 14 years in mines or other hazardous occupations or processes. (USSD Report 2012) **[3n] (Section 7c)**
- Criminal age of responsibility: seven years old. (UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, 19 October 2009) **[79c] (paragraph 99a)**
- The Pakistan Penal Code 1860 states 'Nothing is an offence which is done by a child above seven years of age and under twelve, who has not attained sufficient maturity of understanding to judge of the nature and consequences of his conduct on that occasion.' **[21a] (Section 83)**
- Minimum voluntary recruitment age: 17 years old. (US Department of Labor's 2011 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor, 26 September 2012) **[91] (p479)**

24.09 The CIA World Factbook, updated 16 April 2013, accessed 1 May 2013, stated that soldiers could not be sent into combat until they were 18 years of age. **[4a] (Military)** The US Department of Labor stated that 'There are reports of children being used by non-state militant groups in armed conflict.' **[91] (p478)**

See also subsection: [Domestic legislation](#), [Underage/forced marriage](#), [Child labour](#), and Sections: [Military Service](#); and [Women](#)

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Legal rights

24.10 The SPARC Report 2012 noted that, three years after the 18th Constitutional Amendment '... negligible efforts have been made by the provincial governments to

pass child rights legislation relating to underage employment, violence against children, administration of juvenile justice and children's right to education.' [71a] (p4 – Child rights)

24.11 The HRCP Report 2012 stated:

'The National Assembly established a Parliamentary Forum on Child Rights (PFCR) in July 2012 with the stated objective of giving focused attention to issues of child welfare in the country. Speaking on Universal Children's Day at an awareness event organized by PFCR, the prime minister declared 2013 as the year of children and announced Rs 30 million for PFCR to spearhead its child development agenda. He said that the PFCR was created to ensure that parliamentarians take responsibility of monitoring public institutions engaged in the provision of education, healthcare, food, nutrition, protection and safe environment to children.' [27b] (p183-184)

24.12 The Child Rights Information Network (CRIN) provided a briefing on the status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in national law, the status of children involved in legal proceedings, the legal means to challenge violations of children's rights and the practical considerations involved in challenging violations, in its report '[Pakistan: Legal status of the child](#)', dated 12 June 2013. [34b]

Domestic legislation

24.13 The SPARC Report 2012 noted some positive developments regarding national legislation, which included the passing of the following laws:

- Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2012 (applicable in the Islamabad Capital Territory – ICT)
- National Commission for Human Rights Act 2012
- Juvenile Justice System (Amendment) Ordinance 2012
- Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2012 [71a] (p10-11, Child rights)

24.14 The HRCP Report 2012 noted that during Pakistan's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October 2012, recommendations included the adoption of all pending bills, including: '... the Criminal Law Amendment (Child Protection) Bill 2009, the National Commission on the Rights of Children Bill 2009, the Prohibition of Corporal Punishment Bill, the Child Marriages Restraint (Amendment) Bill and the Charter of Child Rights Bill 2009.' [27b] (p182)

24.15 On 19 October 2009, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed concerns '...about legal inconsistencies concerning the definition of a child at federal, provincial and territorial levels and between secular and sharia law. It notes in particular the difference between the minimum legal age for marriage of boys (18 years) and that of girls (16 years) and the definition of a girl child contained in the Zina and Hadood Ordinances (1979) (until 16 years or puberty).' [79c] (paragraph 26)

See also subsections: [Underage/forced marriage](#) and [Childcare and protection](#) and Section: Women: [Family laws: marriage, divorce and inheritance](#)

24.16 Regarding child labour, the USSD Report 2012 stated that:

'The constitution expressly prohibits the employment of children below the age of 14 in any factory, mine, or other hazardous site. The law limits a child's workday to seven

hours, including a one-hour break after three hours of labor, and sets permissible times of day for work and time off. Children are not allowed to work overtime or at night, and a child should have one day off per week. In addition, the law requires employers to keep a register of children working for them for labor inspectors to verify. These prohibitions and regulations do not apply to family businesses or government schools.

‘The law protects all children younger than age 18 from exploitation and defines exploitative entertainment as all activities related to human sports or sexual practices and other abusive practices. Parents who exploit their children are also liable under the law. The law makes bonded labor by children punishable by up to five years in prison and 50,000 rupees (\$515) in fines. The government considers four occupations and 34 processes illegal for children, including street vending, surgical instrument manufacturing, deep-sea fishing, leather manufacturing, brick making, production of soccer balls, and carpet weaving. Despite this, there were reports of children working in all of these areas.’ **[3n] (Section 7c)**

24.17 The report added that:

‘Because the Federal Ministry of Labor and Manpower was dissolved during the devolution of labor issues to the provinces, it is unclear whether coordination of child labor issues at the national level remains effective. Labor inspection was carried out at the provincial rather than national level, which contributed to an uneven application of labor law, and in reality enforcement efforts were not adequate to meet the scale of the problem. Inspectors had little training and insufficient resources and were susceptible to corruption. Labor inspections became even more infrequent after devolution, with no floor for the minimum frequency of inspections. Authorities allowed NGOs to perform inspections without interference, and SPARC noted that government officials usually cooperated with their visits.

‘Authorities often did not impose penalties on violators; when they did, the penalties were not a significant deterrent. Although authorities obtained hundreds of convictions for violations of child labor laws, the fines were too low to deter violations.’ **[3n] (Section 7c)**

See also subsection [Child labour](#) and Section: [Employment rights](#)

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Judicial and penal rights

24.18 The HRCP Report 2012 noted:

‘Another year went by without the establishment of a single juvenile court or regular provision of free legal assistance to juveniles involved in criminal litigation despite express provisions to the effect in the Juvenile Justice System Ordinance (JJSO) 2000. Torture in police custody also continued as a norm – one juvenile was reported to have been killed in police custody in Jhang district of Punjab in August 2012. AGHS Child Rights Unit, a project for the promotion and protection of child rights, conducted interviews of nearly 100 children from eight juvenile prisons of Punjab in 2012 and more than 95 percent complained of torture of varying degrees in police custody.’ **[27b] (p187)**

- 24.19 The same source stated ‘In May 2012, Juvenile Justice System (Amendment) Ordinance 2012 under Article 89 of the Constitution was passed that empowered the federal government to extend the law to Islamabad capital territory. According to the newly inserted provision, the federal government may designate an existing Anti-Terrorism Court established under the Anti-terrorism Act, 1997 to exercise the power of a juvenile court in the territory of the federal capital.’ **[27b] (p187-188)**
- 24.20 The SPARC website, accessed 16 March 2012, described the juvenile justice system in Pakistan and stated that the Juvenile Justice System Ordinance (JJSO) 2000: ‘Lays down the criteria to be followed at all stages of the juvenile trial proceedings, including arrest and bail, and the establishment of juvenile courts. It brought about improvement in two major areas, defining a child as a person below the age of 18 years and prohibiting the death penalty for children.’ **[71e] (Juvenile Justice, National Laws)**
- 24.21 The SPARC Report 2013 stated that, in March 2013, the federal cabinet agreed to raise the criminal age of responsibility from seven to 12 years under the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill. However, the legislation had still to be passed. **[71a] (p15 – Child rights)**
- 24.22 The Committee on the Rights of the Child, in its Concluding observations to Pakistan, dated 19 October 2009, remained deeply concerned that:
- ‘(a) The minimum age of criminal responsibility continues to remain very low (7 years);
 - ‘(b) Juvenile offenders have reportedly been sentenced to death, very long imprisonment and high fines even after the promulgation of JJSO;
 - ‘(c) Many of the authorities in charge of JJSO implementation, particularly within provincial Governments and tribal areas, are unaware of its existence;
 - ‘(d) JJSO is poorly implemented in the country and particularly in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas where the Frontier Crimes Regulation of 1901, which does not take into account child rights and allows, inter alia, for collective punishment, continues to apply;
 - ‘(e) The number of children in prisons is high, they are often detained in poor conditions together with adult offenders and thus are increasingly vulnerable to abuse and ill-treatment; and
 - ‘(f) The number of juvenile courts, trained lawyers and probation officers is insufficient.’ **[79c] (paragraph 99)**
- 24.23 Amnesty International stated in its annual Report 2010 for Pakistan (covering events between January and December 2009) that ‘The Juvenile Justice System Ordinance of 2000 remained inadequately implemented. Its provision to detain children separately from adults remained unimplemented.’ **[13d] (p253; Children’s right’s)**
- 24.24 Human Rights Watch stated in its report ‘Enforcing the International Prohibition on the Juvenile Death Penalty’, dated 30 May 2008, that:
- ‘The Juvenile Justice System Ordinance of 2000 bans the death penalty for crimes committed by persons under 18 at the time of the offense, and requires juvenile courts to order a medical examination when a defendant’s age is in doubt. The ordinance was reportedly extended to apply to Azad Jammu and Kashmir until 2003, and to the Provincially Administered Tribal Areas and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas in late 2004. However, implementation remains very limited because many areas lack the underlying courts and other structures called for in the law... Pakistan’s Supreme Court

sometimes rejected death penalty appeals by juvenile offenders when their age was not recorded at the time of the original trial.’ **[7d] (p16)**

- 24.25 The SPARC Report 2011 noted, however, that the Actions (in Aid for Civil Power) Regulation 2011 for the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) fails to provide a specific definition of a child. Therefore, ‘If this law takes into account the age of the child provided in the Frontier Crimes (Amendment) Regulation 2011, then children between the ages of 16 and 18 years convicted under the regulation could possibly be given the death sentence or life imprisonment.’ **[71b] (p145)**

See also Judiciary: [Frontier Crimes Regulation \(FCR\)](#)

- 24.26 The Express Tribune reported on 16 January 2012 that, despite the JJSO prohibiting the death penalty for children, they could still be sentenced to death under other laws. The report noted:

‘Currently, there are five prisoners in Mach Jail in Balochistan on death row, and all of them were sentenced to death when they were children. The first is Mewal Shah. He is now 20 years old and was sentenced to death by the anti-terrorism court in Mastung. After four years in solitary confinement his sentence was commuted by the Balochistan High Court to 25 years rigorous imprisonment. He was 13 at the time he committed his offence. The second, Sarfaraz, was 16 or 17 at the time when he is said to have committed a murder. He was sentenced to death in 2009 and his appeal is pending in the Balochistan High Court.

‘The third is Bhai Khan, son of Shah Mohammad Chandio. He is now 18 years of age but was a minor when he was sentenced to death by the district and sessions judge of Dera Allah Yar. The fourth case involves Naseerullah who at the age of 17, is still a minor. He was sentenced to death in March 2010. The last one is a prisoner by the name Zahoor Ahmed, son of Sajawal Jakhrani. He is 17 years old and was given the death sentence in March 2010 by the district and sessions judge of Dera Allah Yar.’ **[92b]**

- 24.27 The Amnesty International Report 2010 stated that ‘On 31 August, the Supreme Court suspended an order passed by the Lahore High Court in April under which death sentences would not be imposed on women and juveniles in narcotics cases.’ **[13d] (p253; Death penalty)**

See also section on [Death penalty](#)

- 24.28 The Government of Pakistan recorded in its response to issues raised by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, published 1 September 2009, that ‘At a given time approximately 9,000 to 10,000 children remain in criminal litigation with the majority of them released on bail at their first appearance in the court.’ **[79a] (p26)**

- 24.29 The HRCP Report 2012 cited that:

‘There were a total of 1,289 juvenile prisoners in jails across the country. The overwhelming majority of them was under trial. Out of the 779 juvenile prisoners in Punjab 668 were under trial. Of the 260 in Sindh 235 were under trial. In 2012 also, no juvenile court was established or regular provision of free legal assistance to juveniles involved in criminal litigation ensured in violation of provisions of the Juvenile Justice

System Ordinance (JJSO) 2000. That was believed to be a contributory factor to the high ratio of under-trial juveniles in prisons.’ **[27b] (p74)**

- 24.30 The Government of Pakistan reported to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child that ‘Children have been convicted under the Zina and Hadood Ordinance during the reporting period [dates not confirmed]. However, their number remains very low. As on 31 December 2008, there were 15 juveniles convicted under different sections of the Zina and Hadood Ordinance. It is indeed important to note that on the above-mentioned date there were [a] total [of] 153 convicted juveniles all across Pakistan.’ **[79a] (p13)**

See also Section Judiciary: [Hudood Ordinances](#)

- 24.31 The Pakistan government is obliged to provide free legal aid to juvenile offenders under section three of the Juvenile Justice System Ordinance. However, the ACHR South Asia Human Rights Index 2008 stated that ‘most offenders continue to be denied access to legal aid primarily due to the failure of panel of lawyers to provide legal aid.’ **[67b] (p78)**

For further information on juvenile justice see the Child Rights International Network (CRIN) report [Inhuman sentencing of children in Pakistan](#), dated May 2011. **[34a]**

See also Section [Prison conditions](#)

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Violence against children

- 24.32 The SPARC Report 2011 observed:

‘Violence against children remains strongly entrenched in the Pakistani society because of two major reasons. Firstly, a tacit cultural approval encourages violence as a legitimate instrument for disciplining children. Secondly, social and political upheavals end up exacerbating certain forms of violence against children... The government policies to counteract the various forms of violence against children remain ineffective in face of a weak implementation regime... Legislation to deal with child sexual abuse is in place but needs to be more specialized with a broader definition that includes all forms of such abuse...’ **[71b] (p198)**

- 24.33 The same report noted:

‘The female children of minority communities are worst affected as gender and religious discrimination compound to limit their access to education and government development initiatives. Non Muslim girl children are also subjected to forced conversions to Islam through rape and abductions with direct or indirect involvement of extremist religious organizations. Incidents of forced conversions, often linked to gender based violence, are increasingly being reported from different parts of the country. The situation is worsened when the law enforcement agencies side with the Islamic groups.’ **[71b] (p154)**

See also Freedom of religion: [Forced religious conversions](#) and [Hindus and Sikhs](#)

- 24.34 The USSD Report 2012 recorded that:

‘Child abuse was widespread. Young girls and boys used as domestic servants were abused, beaten, and made to work long hours by employers, who in some cases were relatives. According to an August 2011 article in Dawn, more than 170,000 children lived on the streets. Up to 90 percent were abused sexually on the first night that they slept outside, and 60 percent accused police of sexually abusing them.

‘The penal code defines statutory rape as sexual intercourse with a female younger than age 16. The punishment for rape is death or 10 to 25 years’ imprisonment and a fine. Gang rape is punishable by death or life imprisonment.’ **[3n] (Section 6)**

24.35 According to Cruel Numbers 2012, a report published by the non-governmental organisation (NGO) Sahil, that works against child sexual abuse and exploitation, 2,788 cases of sexual abuse were recorded against children in Pakistan in 2012, an increase of 21 per cent from the previous year. The majority of the crimes reported were rape and sodomy cases, with a much higher proportion of girls being sexually abused in comparison to boys. The report found that most abusers were known to the victims and that the abuse often occurred in the home. Children living in rural areas were found to be most at risk. All figures were compiled from 86 national, regional and local newspapers. **[65a] (p3)**

24.36 The SPARC Report 2012 stated:

‘According to Madadgaar National Helpline, around 5,659 cases of violence against children were reported from across Pakistan from January to October 2012. These included 943 murders, 1,170 injuries, 302 cases of sodomy; 204 cases of child trafficking, 410 forced marriages, 164 Karo Kari incidents, and 260 cases of missing children. Other incidents of violence included 407 cases of sexual assault, 547 torture cases, 323 child suicides, 530 kidnappings and 176 Vani cases.’ **[71a] (p154-155)**

24.37 The HRCP Report 2011 stated:

‘Media reports suggested an increase in abduction by parents in countries that have not ratified the Hague Convention on International Child Abduction and Pakistan was one of the most common abduction destinations last year from amongst these countries. Between April 2010 and March 2011, the number of children being abducted to Pakistan from Britain was reported to be 21. A large number of kidnappings and abductions were reported this year also. At least nine cases were highlighted in the media where newborns disappeared from hospitals... Militant groups in Pakistan are known to kidnap or coerce children to spy, fight or even carry out suicide bombings. There have also been accounts of sexual and physical abuse of these children.’ **[27g] (p181)**

See also Section [Trafficking](#)

24.38 The HRCP Report 2012 noted that at the end of 2012 there was no progress on passing the Prohibition of Corporal Punishment Bill, 2010, and that few measures to prevent corporal punishment at a provincial level had been taken. The report noted ‘Media reports highlighted at least 23 cases of corporal punishment where students were brutally beaten resulting in serious injury or death. The cases reported from Punjab resulted in the death of two children (in Hasan Abdal and Lahore), two children committed suicide in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa due to fear of punishment and in eight cases the students suffered from fractured limbs due to incessant beating by their teachers.’ **[27b] (p190)**

See also subsection [Education](#)

- 24.39 The SPARC Report 2012 cited some of the harmful traditional practices (HTPs) that blighted women and children's lives in Pakistan's patriarchal society. Such HTPs included early and child marriage, honour killings, exchange marriages, and marriages contracted to settle disputes. **[71a] (p175 – Violence against children)**

See also Women: [Violence against women](#)

- 24.40 Amnesty International's annual Report 2010 on Pakistan stated that 'In NWFP and the tribal areas, Taleban groups closed or burned down girls' schools, forced women to wear a veil and prohibited them from leaving their homes unless accompanied by male relatives. Several women were punished, shot dead or mutilated for alleged "immoral" activities. Legal redress sought for abuses of women's rights remained difficult to obtain.' **[13d] (p253; Violence against women and girls)**

See also [Militant attacks on schools](#)

- 24.41 The HRCP Report 2009 stated that:

'According to intelligence officials, more than 5,000 child suicide bombers between the ages of 10 and 17 have been trained by Taliban so far. Money is used to enroll the recruits and a suicide bomber could be hired at 5 to 25 lakh rupees. The military showed reporters video footage of a classroom where a masked teacher taught children how to carry out a suicide attack. The children, sitting in rows, were wearing white headbands inscribed with Quranic verses. On April 6, a child suicide bomber blew himself up at a Shia mosque in Chakwal district killing 26 people and injuring more than 50.

'Some of the boys who escaped from Taliban camps in Swat have claimed that as many as 400 children were still kept at the camps. A young boy in Swat recalled how the Taliban had kidnapped him and his classmate while the two were playing in the street. In August, the army recovered 20 such boys in Swat; many more were believed to be in Taliban hands. Three of the boys, at a news briefing, appeared to be younger than ten and were visibly traumatized and occasionally broke down in tears[.] The others were mostly in their mid-teens. The Taliban wanted to turn these boys into informants, fighters or suicide bombers.' **[27c] (p216-217)**

- 24.42 The US Department of Labor's 2011 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor, published 26 September 2012, stated that:

'There are reports of children being used by non-state militant groups in armed conflict and some evidence that Afghan and Pakistani children are trafficked across the border for use by these groups... Non-state groups kidnap children or coerce parents into giving away their children to spy, fight or die in suicide attacks... These children are subjected to physical, sexual and psychological abuse... Reports indicate that children as young as age 11 are recruited by pro-Taliban insurgents, trained as suicide bombers and trafficked between Afghanistan and Pakistan...' **[91] (p478)**

- 24.43 The SPARC Report 2011 noted 'In 2011, 250 children died because of armed conflict in different parts of the country. [The] majority of cases were reported from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (167 cases) where children died as child soldiers or in crossfire between the armed forces and terrorists.' **[71b] (p197)**

See also Sections [Security situation](#); Women: [Violence against women](#); and for treatment of children in prison see subsection on [Judicial and penal rights](#).

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Underage/forced marriage

- 24.44 In the SPARC Report 2012, it was noted that the Child Marriages Restraint Act has set the minimum age of marriage; 16 years for girls and 18 years for boys. The penalty for solemnizing or contracting a child marriage is punishable with a fine of Rs1,000 and imprisonment of one month. The report noted that the penalties were too low, considering the harmful physical and emotional impacts. **[71a] (p177)**
- 24.45 Shirkat Gah – Women’s Resource Centre, Pakistan, made a ‘Stakeholders Joint Submission for Pakistan’s Review in The Human Rights Council -14th Session, October 2012’ (Shirkat Gah Stakeholders Joint Submission), undated, accessed 8 May 2012, in which it stated:
- ‘40% girls are married by age 18 and 13% are married by age 15. In Pakistan, one woman dies every 20 minutes during childbirth and the major cause is child marriage. The Child Marriage Restraint Act establishes a minimum age of marriage at 16 for girls and 18 for boys despite overwhelming evidence of its negative impact on their physical, emotional and mental well being. Legislative amendments are needed to establish 18 years as the minimum age of marriage and to criminalize young age marriage with heavy fines and punishment. Inconsistency in the law on minimum age of marriage also needs to be removed.’ **[132a] (p11)**
- 24.46 The HRCP Report 2012 stated that ‘As many forced marriages went unnoticed and unreported, exact figures were not easily available, but reports suggested that in just the month of January [2012] about 338 cases of forced marriages took place in 31 districts across Pakistan. The tradition of girls being married before reaching adulthood or even puberty remained an outstanding issue.’ **[27b] (p174-175)**
- 24.47 The Freedom House Freedom in the World 2013 – Pakistan report stated ‘Illegal forms of child and forced marriage remain problems.’ **[5a]**
- 24.48 The HRCP Report 2011 noted that in 2011 the Prevention of Anti-Women Practices (amendment) Bill 2008, was passed by the Senate.
- ‘Under this law customary practices of giving females in marriages for settling disputes such as swara, vani and badal-e-sulh, their marriage with the Holy Quran and denying the rights of inheritance to women, are now criminal offences. Children were beneficiaries by extension of this law which sought to curb anti-women practices. Under this law, a person coercing a woman into marriage, marriage to Quran, badal-e-sulh, vani or swara was liable to a minimum of three years of imprisonment and Rs. 500,000 fine.’ **[27g] (p184)**
- 24.49 However, the HRCP Report 2012 stated:
- ‘The customs of vani and swara continued throughout the year and little action was taken against the perpetrators despite the passing of Prevention of Anti-Women Practices (Criminal Law Amendment) Act, 2011 the previous year. The electronic media

highlighted around 30 cases of underage forced marriage, out of which five were cases of swara and 12 of vani, the majority of which took place in Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In May 2012, the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan took serious note of the practice of giving girls away in marriage to settle disputes on the intervention of a jirga or panchayat. The LJCP suggested amendments to the relevant laws to award rigorous punishment to those who abet, instigate, demand or receive a female in marriage as Badal-i-Sulha (in exchange for compromise). The Commission proposed that the punishment for such action should be extended to a maximum of 14 years, but must not be less than 10 years, along with a fine.’ **[27b] (p192)**

- 24.50 Amnesty International (AI) stated in its annual Report 2008 on Pakistan that ‘The higher judiciary on several occasions ordered the prosecution of people responsible for swara, the handing over of a girl or woman for marriage to opponents to settle a dispute. The practice was made punishable with up to 10 years’ imprisonment by a 2005 law, but continued to be widespread.’ **[13a] (Violence against women)** In its annual Report 2010 for Pakistan, covering 2009 events, AI noted that the forced marriage of girls to settle disputes continued. **[13d] (p 253, Children’s rights)**
- 24.51 The ACHR South Asia Human Rights Index 2008 reported that ‘The girl child continues to be considered as the “personal property” of the family and used as a means to settle debt or family dispute.’ The report gave instances where such practices had occurred. **[67b] (p77)**

See also Section: Women: [Socio-Economic Rights](#) and Freedom of religion: [Hindus and Sikhs](#)

Child labour

- 24.52 The USSD Report 2012 noted that:

‘Due to weak government enforcement of child labor laws, child labor remained pervasive. NGOs and government sources noted that the 2010 and 2011 floods proved devastating for children, with the destruction of schools and dire financial situations compelling families to put children to work. According to the HRCP [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan] and SPARC [Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child], there were 10 million to 11.5 million child laborers, many of them in agriculture and domestic work.’ **[3n] (Section 7c)**

- 24.53 The US Department of Labor’s 2011 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor, published 26 September 2012, stated that:

‘In 2011, Pakistan made no advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. Although the Government continued to implement programs to address the problem, it continued to lack sufficient legal protections for working children. There is no minimum age for work and the minimum age for hazardous work is 4 years below the international standard age of 18. Enforcement efforts remain weak. Efforts to combat exploitative child labor were complicated in 2011 when federal-level agencies charged with coordinating the national response to the worst forms of child labor were dissolved during a process of dispersing many government functions to the provinces. Children continue to engage in the worst forms of child labor in dangerous forms of agriculture and are subject to bonded labor.’ **[91] (p477)**

- 24.54 On 13 August 2012, the UN General Assembly published a summarised 'Compilation [of reports] prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/2 – Pakistan' for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated that, although the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) welcomed the 2005 amendment to the Employment of Children Act, which enhanced the list of hazardous processes and occupations, it '...remained deeply concerned that the prevalence of child labour is extremely high and has increased in recent years; at the low and variable minimum age for admission to employment and at the poor implementation of the Convention.' **[83c] (paragraph 48)**
- 24.55 The Asian Human Rights Commission, commenting on the speech made by Pakistan's foreign minister, Ms. Rabbani Khar, at the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on Pakistan, stated on 4 November 2012 that:
- 'Child labour is a very common practice and it is estimated that as many as 20 million children are engaged in manual labour in Pakistan. This is particularly common in the rural areas where children are used as bonded labour to pay off their parents' debts. Also in the rural areas over 70 percent of the children are denied education and health care.
- 'Often the children in the informal sectors such as brick kilns and engineering sectors are not paid money, but their wages given as food, once a day. There are reports that over two million children have gone missing and are feared to have been trafficked. There is also the question of children being used in the sex industry. Neither of these points have been examined by the government or responsibly dealt with in the minister's report.' **[52m]**
- 24.56 The US Department of Labor 2011 report stated 'Children in urban areas are often employed as domestic servants and may be subjected to extreme abuse. Reports indicate that some child domestic servants have even been killed by their employers.' **[91] (p477)**
- 24.57 On the issue of forced and bonded labour of children, the USSD Report 2012 noted that:
- 'Children were forced to work in the brick-kiln, glass bangle, and carpet-weaving industries, as well as agriculture, as part of fulfilling their families' debt obligation to feudal landowners or brick-kiln owners. UNICEF estimated the number of children working in brick kilns at 250,000. In August researchers estimated that there were approximately two million bonded laborers, many of whom included entire families with children.
- 'Poor rural families sometimes sold their children into domestic servitude or other types of work, or they paid agents to arrange for such work, often believing that their children would work under decent conditions. Some children sent to work for relatives or acquaintances in exchange for education or other opportunities ended up in exploitative conditions or forced labor.' **[3n] (Section 7c)**
- 24.58 The HRCP Report 2009 noted that 'On an average, children worked 6 hours a day, 6 days a week and 11 months a year, earning only Rs. 1,145 per month. Almost one-third

of the children were unpaid workers who worked with their parents or elder siblings in the field.’ **[27c] (p229)**

24.59 On a positive note, the US Department of Labor report stated:

‘The Government of Pakistan continued to administer National Centers for Rehabilitation of Child Labor to remove children ages 5 to 14 from hazardous labor and provide them with education, clothing and a stipend. There are currently 151 centers... Children have been withdrawn through services from the centers from hazardous labor in brick making, carpet weaving, mining, leather tanning, construction, glass bangle manufacturing and agriculture...’ **[91] (p481)**

See also subsection [Domestic legislation](#), Sections: [Trafficking](#), and [Employment rights](#)

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Childcare and protection

For information on child custody, see Women, [Inheritance and child custody](#)

For information on child refugees, see [Foreign refugees](#)

24.60 On 6 August 2012 the UN General Assembly reproduced Pakistan’s ‘National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21’, for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated:

‘In addition to the recent legislative measures, a number of administrative steps have been taken for protection of child rights:

- ‘The federal and the provincial governments have developed a Child Protection Management Information System (CPMIS). CPMIS is a national monitoring system to collect district-level data on five areas of child protection, namely juvenile justice, child trafficking, sexual exploitation, violence against children and family environment/alternative care. The objective is to assess the situation of child rights in the country and make informed policy decisions.
- A National Child Protection Centre (NCPC), set-up in 2007, provides temporary shelters to child victims of violence and homeless, street and runaway children. It also provides psychological counseling and social legal and medical assistance and helps in rehabilitation, reunification and reintegration of these children. It has a National Child Protection Helpline & National Child Protection Network with stakeholders throughout the country.
- Children Complaints Offices have been established in the secretariats of Federal and Provincial Ombudspersons to address the concerns and complaints regarding child protection in schools, residential institutions and public services.

- In March 2011, Punjab established a Child Protection and Welfare Bureau to protect and rehabilitate destitute and neglected children by providing them opportunities for education and personal development.
- The Pakistan Bait-ul-Maal operates Sweet Pakistan Homes across the country for orphan, destitute and homeless children. The Homes give protection to these children and provide them quality education, health and better living conditions. All four provinces have set up welfare homes for destitute children to rehabilitate lost, runaway, kidnapped children and children victims of violence.
- Child Protection/ Education and Counseling Centres have been established with support from UNICEF. These Centres provide non-formal education, psychological counseling and legal aid to street children, working children and children victims of violence and commercial sexual exploitation.' **[83b] (paragraph 61)**

24.61 The SPARC Report 2011 noted that the Child Protection (Criminal Law Amendment) Bill, which criminalises the sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography and internal trafficking of children, has remained pending since 2009 despite calls to the federal government from the President to expedite the process for enactment of the bill. **[71b] (p4-5)**

See also subsection [Domestic legislation](#), and [Trafficking](#)

24.62 On 12 August 2009, in response to questions put by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, regarding incorporating the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into federal and provincial legislation, the Pakistan Government stated that:

'The Provincial Governments are in process of setting up child protection systems based on the general principles of the Convention [UNCRC]... The Sindh Government is setting up a child protection authority for the province through the Sindh Child Protection Authority Bill, 2009... The NWFP Government is considering to set up [sic] a Provincial Commission for the Welfare and Protection of Children under the NWFP Child Welfare and Protection Bill, 2009... The Balochistan Government has drafted a provincial child protection policy in line with the National Child Protection Policy... The AJK [Azad Jammu and Kashmir] Government is considering setting up a comprehensive child protection system through, the AJK Child Protection Authority Bill, 2009.' **[79a] (p3)**

24.63 The same source noted that three Child Protection Centres had been established, one in Islamabad and two in Balochistan. **[79a] (p18)**

See also [Domestic legislation](#)

24.64 The UNICEF Pakistan Annual Report 2011, published 2012, stated that, through its Child Protection Programme:

'About 136,000 children received services through 16 Child Protection Units, nine helplines, four child sexual abuse units, 22 child protection desks in police stations and 38 non-formal literacy centres for street children and working children in Balochistan, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 96 community-based Child Protection Centres were established to benefit IDP children and 1,600 community-based Child Protection Committees were formed in areas affected by floods.

'Training was provided to more than 17,000 people of different professional categories related to child protection, including five Child Complaints Offices under the federal and provincial ombudsmen.' **[72c] (p43)**

See also [Humanitarian issues](#)

- 24.65 The Children Complaints Office (CCO), placed in the office of Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman) of Pakistan, stated that its main function was '...The CCO's main function is to serve as a dedicated mechanism for receiving and resolving complaints from and about children, against maladministration by any federal agency and will help Pakistan implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). From 2009 to 2012 the CCO has received a total of 663 complaints.' The CCO has designated Investigation Officers for handling child related complaints in Peshawar, Lahore, Quetta and Karachi. Its headquarters is based at the Wafabi Mohtasib office in Islamabad. (Children's Complaint Office, undated, accessed 20 May 2013) **[29k]**
- 24.66 The Child Protection and Welfare Bureau, accessed 24 June 2013, an autonomous body under the administrative control of the Home Department, Government of Punjab, was established in accordance with the Punjab Destitute and Neglected Children's Act Amendment Act 2007. **[64a]** The Child Protection and Welfare Bureau offer a range of services to support children and families, including: the Child Protection Unit for the '...rescue, recovery, custody, rehabilitation, reintegration and follow up of destitute & neglected children'; **[64b]** Child Help Line, a 24 hour, seven day week telephone helpline; **[64c]** and; Open and Mobile Reception Centers providing help to abused and/or street children. **[64d] [64e]**
- 24.67 The non-governmental organisation (NGO) [Rozan](#), based in Islamabad, website accessed 27 June 2013, stated that it worked on issues '...related to emotional and psychological health, gender, violence against women and children, and the psychological and reproductive health of adolescents.' Rozan offered a helpline and ran four support programmes:
- [Aangan](#), which works on child sexual abuse
 - [Zeest](#), which works on violence against women (VAW)
 - [Rabta](#), Rozan's police training program
 - [Humqadam](#), which works with men and boys to mobilize them against VAW **[117a]**
- 24.68 The Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) noted on its website, accessed 16 March 2012, that it had established Drop-in Centers (DICs) in Peshawar, Rawalpindi, Hyderabad and Multan for children living or working on the streets. SPARC noted that 'There are ongoing efforts to assist street children through various programmes including rehabilitation centers by the government and drop in centers by civil society organizations that provide psycho- social counseling, some basic health and education services. Some of them attempt to reunite street and runaway children with their families.' **[71d]**
- 24.69 With regards to child sexual abuse and the law protecting victims, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child stated in its report dated 19 March 2009 that:
- 'Pakistan Penal Code and Haddood [Hudood] Ordinances of 1979 can be used to prosecute some child sexual abuse cases. The Pakistani Criminal Justice System does not deal with sexual offences against children any differently than sexual offences

against adults. Similarly, the abuse of children or sexual abuse not involving penetration could be dealt with under section 511 of the PPC “whoever attempts to commit an offence punishable by this code with imprisonment for life or imprisonment, or to cause such an offence to be committed, and as such attempt does any act towards the commission of offence, shall, where no express provision is provided by this code for the punishment of such attempt, be punished with imprisonment of any description provided for the offence, for a term which may extend to one half of the longest term of imprisonment provided for that offence or such fine as is provided for the offence, or with both”.’ **[79b] (paragraph 628)**

See also Women: [Women Protection Act \(WPA\)](#)

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Children’s homes

- 24.70 SOS Children’s Villages’ International noted in its Pakistan Overview, accessed 20 May 2013, that ‘... there are ten SOS Children’s Villages in Pakistan, six SOS Youth Facilities, six SOS Hermann Gmeiner Schools, five SOS Vocational Training Centres, five SOS Social Centres, one SOS Medical Centre, and two SOS Emergency Relief Programmes. Two SOS Children’s Villages and one Hermann Gmeiner school are under construction.’ **[28b]** SOS Children’s Villages’ were located in Lahore, Dhodial, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, Karachi, Sargodha, Sialkot, Multan and Quetta. **[28a] (Children villages)**
- 24.71 The Child Protection and Welfare Bureau, Punjab, accessed 24 June 2013, stated that it had Child Protection Institutions providing children with ‘...high quality residential, educational, vocational and recreational facilities.’ **[64f]**
- 24.72 Reporting to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on 1 September 2009, the Government of Pakistan stated that ‘There are 8,356 children deprived of their family environment placed in 92 institutions all over the country. In the NWFP, 17 institutions housed 2,510 children, whereas in Sindh, 23 institutions housed 1681 children. In Punjab, 3,955 children placed in 49 institutions, whereas in Balochistan, 170 children placed in two institutions. In Federal Administered Tribal Areas 40 children placed in one institution.’ The same source noted that in 2008 there were 361 children placed in foster families. **[79a] (p24)**
- 24.73 The Edhi Foundation, the largest social welfare organisation in Pakistan, noted on its website, accessed 9 May 2013, that it had 335 Edhi Centres across Pakistan, which, amongst other things, provided shelter for destitute orphans. **[19a] (About us)**

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Education

For information on educational facilities for disabled children, see the section [Disability](#)

- 24.74 Pakistan’s Ministry of Finance reported in its Pakistan Economic Survey 2010-11, undated, that there were 157,360 primary schools, 41,330 Middle schools and 24,792 Secondary schools functioning in Pakistan. In 2009-10 an estimated 18,756 million

pupils were enrolled in primary school, 5,501 million in middle school and 2,581 million in secondary school. **[29e] (Chapter 10: Education)**

24.75 UNICEF stated in its Overview for Pakistan, undated, accessed 26 June 2013, that ‘Just over half of the 19 million children of primary school going age are enrolled in primary education. Compared to 58 per cent of boys, there are 48 per cent of girls enrolled in primary school.’ **[72a] (Background)**

24.76 The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) noted in its EFA [Education for All] Global Monitoring Report 2012 that:

‘Pakistan has the second largest number of children out of school – 5.1 million – yet reduced its spending on education from 2.6% to 2.3% of GNP over the decade... **(p9)**

‘In Pakistan, the Punjab Education Foundation has been implementing a programme since 2006 that provides vouchers to children from disadvantaged backgrounds that allow them to choose from among more than 1,000 low fee private schools... In a country of 5.1 million out-of-school children, the programme is reaching a small number: 267 schools and 80,000 pupils... Punjab is also the part of Pakistan where enrolment is already highest; consequently, the voucher programme is not helping extend access to the parts of the country where it is most needed.’ **[141a] (p77)**

24.77 The USSD Report 2012 stated that:

‘Public schools, particularly beyond the primary grades, were not available in many rural areas, and those that existed were often too far away for a girl to travel unaccompanied. In addition, despite cultural beliefs that boys and girls should be educated separately after primary school, the government often failed to take measures to provide separate restroom facilities or separate classrooms, and there were more government schools for boys than for girls. The attendance rates for girls in primary, secondary, and postsecondary schools were lower than for boys across the board.’ **[3n] (Section 6)**

24.78 The HRCP Report 2011 recorded that:

‘A survey of basic facilities at 147 state-run primary schools across the country found many gaps. Of these 80 percent schools had no staffroom for teachers and 48 percent had no chairs and desks for students, 90 percent had no sanitary worker, 60 percent had no security guard, 44 percent lacked clean drinking water and 67 percent had no playground. The majority of the schools lacked the basic infrastructure, i.e. 32.7 percent schools did not have a boundary wall, 33.6 percent lacked drinking water facility, 35.4 percent had no latrines and around 60 percent schools were without electricity, according to statistics released by the Ministry of Education.’ **[27g] (p218)**

24.79 The same source reported that:

‘One of the positive developments in education this year was the allocation of Rs. 823.1 million to improve physical infrastructure and basic facilities in government primary and elementary schools under “Education Sector Reforms Programme-Provision of Missing Facilities” a project continuing since 2006- 2007 all over Pakistan except Punjab. According to the Economic Survey of Pakistan 2010-2011, the project had achieved 41 percent of its objectives by June. It was also reported in the media that the Punjab government had provided a sum of Rs 10 billion to the Punjab Education Foundation (PEF) to promote school education in marginalised areas through public-private partnership.’ **[27g] (p218)**

- 24.80 With regards to the subjects taught in schools, the Government of Pakistan reported to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, dated 1 September 2009, that ‘Islamiyat will be taught as a separate compulsory subject from Class-III to XII... English is to be taught from class-I onwards as a compulsory subject alongside Urdu... Medium of instruction for all science subjects will be English...’ **[79a] (p20)**
- 24.81 The USSD Report 2012 stated that ‘The constitution mandates that the government provide free and compulsory education to all children between the ages of five and 16. In practice government schools often charged parents for the cost of books, uniforms, and other materials. Parents of lower economic means sometimes chose to send children to madrassahs, where they received free room and board, or to NGO-operated schools.’ **[3n] (Section 6)**

See also [Madrassas](#)

- 24.82 On 6 August 2012 the UN General Assembly reproduced Pakistan’s ‘National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21’, for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated:
- ‘In July 2012, the Parliament passed a bill to provide free and compulsory education to all children, aged between five and 16 years, in Islamabad. The aim of this is to start a national tradition for providing free education to all children. “Every child regardless of sex, nationality or race shall have the fundamental right to free and compulsory education in a neighbourhood school.” It provides that both boys and girls of migrants, including non-Pakistani families should benefit from attending schools.’ **[83b] (paragraph 92)**
- 24.83 The US Department of State International Religious Freedom Report for 2012 (USSD IRF Report 2012), published 20 May 2013, noted that:
- ‘The constitution safeguards “educational institutions with respect to religion.” No student can be forced to receive religious instruction or participate in religious worship in other than his or her own religion. The denial of religious instruction for students of any religious community or denomination also is prohibited.
- ‘Islamiyyat (Islamic studies) is compulsory for all Muslim students in state-run schools. Although students of other religious groups are not legally required to study Islam, they generally are not offered parallel studies in their own religious beliefs and by default are required to take the Islamic studies class. In some schools, non-Muslim students may study akhlaqiyyat, or ethics. Parents may send children to private religious schools, at the family’s expense, and private schools are generally free to teach or not to teach religious studies as they choose.
- ‘The constitution specifically prohibits discriminatory admission to any governmental educational institution solely based on religious affiliation. Officials have stated that the only factors affecting admission to government schools are students’ grades and home provinces; however, students must declare their religious affiliation on application forms. This declaration also is required for private educational institutions, including universities. Students who identify themselves as Muslim must declare in writing that they believe that the Prophet Muhammad is the final prophet, a measure that singles out Ahmadi Muslims. Non-Muslims are required to have their religious affiliation verified

by the head of their local religious communities.’ **[3k] (Section II: Legal/Policy Framework)**

- 24.84 The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom Annual Report 2011 (USCIRF Report 2011), published May 2011, covering events from 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011, noted that:

‘Pakistani primary and secondary schools continue to use textbooks that foster prejudice and intolerance of religious minorities, especially Hindus and Christians. Fifth-grade students read official textbooks claiming that “Hindus and Muslims are not one nation but two different nations. The Hindus could never become sincere in their dealings with the Muslims.” Hindu beliefs and practices are contrasted negatively with those of Islam. Bangladesh’s struggle for independence from Pakistan is blamed in part on the influence of Hindus in the education sector of the former East Pakistan. Such references are not restricted to Islamic studies textbooks but take place in both early elementary and more advanced social studies texts used by all public school students, including non-Muslims. Moreover, the textbooks contain stories, biographies, and poems with an Islamic religious character.’ **[53b] (p118)**

- 24.85 The HRCP Report 2010 stated that ‘Recommendations were made by civil society groups for civic education at schools to be made a compulsory subject at primary level instead of being taught as an optional subject in 9th grade. It was also demanded that textbooks should promote religious and political tolerance, gender equality, human rights, basic principles of citizenship and care for the environment.’ However, the report expressed concern ‘... at the long gap between policy formulation and implementation... many public schools did not have access to textbooks with the new curriculum.’ **[27e] (p265-266)**

- 24.86 The USCIRF Report 2011 stated:

‘Efforts to improve curriculum guidelines and to produce and publish new public school textbooks have been delayed by practical and ideological hurdles. Although “The New Education Policy 2009” is being implemented predominantly to raise the literacy rate in Pakistan, that policy maintains Islamic Studies as a compulsory subject. One positive change allows minorities the option of taking an ethics course instead of Islamic Studies from third grade onward, whereas the previous policy offered this option only in grades nine and ten. However, Pakistani NGOs argue that this option means little in practice because current ethics textbooks are based on previous curriculum guidelines which contain Islamic biases. Moreover, minority students still tend to avoid opting out of Islamic Studies for fear of being isolated from the rest of the class or of having their grades negatively impacted.’ **[53b] (p118)**

- 24.87 In an attempt to address the high number of out of school children, the Government of Pakistan told the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, in a report dated 1 September 2009, that:

‘Poor and disadvantaged children are being provided with incentives in the form of food, nutrition and edible oil etc. Budget for education is being enhanced from the existing 2.2 per cent to 4 per cent of GDP. For the promotion of girl education a project has been implemented in collaboration with UNFPA [UN Population Fund]. Under the project existing girl primary schools have been renovated and incentives provided to the girl child of deprived families enabling them to continue their education. Free text books are being provided to all students of the primary school. Primary education in the public

sector is almost free. Around 13,000 non formal basic education schools have been opened for out of school children. The said number is likely to increase to 20,000 in the next two years. The Compulsory Primary Education Act has been enacted in three out of four provinces of the country as well as in Islamabad Capital Territory.’ **[79a] (p14)**

- 24.88 The website Enterprising Schools, reporting on the Affordable Private School (APS) market, accessed 16 March 2012, stated that:

‘There are more than 90,000 affordable private schools in Pakistan and more than 60% of them are recognized by the Department of Education. From 1999-2009 private provision multiplied almost three fold from 36,000 schools to over 90,000 at primary and secondary levels spreading across urban and rural areas. Punjab has the highest growth out of all provinces, with over 32% of primary school students enrolled in private schools. Private provision in Pakistan is seen to be providing a “choice” for even poor families who are willing to buy quality education for their children.’ **[95a]**

- 24.89 On the cost of private schooling an undated report published by the Global Poverty Research Group, ‘The Quality of School Provision in Pakistan: Are Girls Worse Off?’, accessed 23 January 2012, stated ‘Private school fees range from exorbitantly high to relatively small amounts.’ In its sample the report found that average private school fees ranged from 116 rupees per month to 3,766 rupees per month. **[127a] (p6)**
- 24.90 A 2001 study on schooling choices of low-income families in urban Lahore found that the cost of private schooling was comparable to government schools, which charged for uniforms, books and supplies. (Journal of Human Resources, 2001) **[128a] (p12)**
- 24.91 A report dated 21 March 2002, ‘The Rise of Private Schooling in Pakistan: Catering to the Urban Elite or Educating the Rural Poor?’, by Tahir Andrabi, Pomona College, Jishnu Das, The World Bank, and Asim Ijaz Khwaja, Harvard University, cited the average tuition fees for self-owned (for profit) primary schools in urban and rural areas of Pakistan’s provinces. **[129a] (p13-14)**

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Militant attacks on schools

- 24.92 In its ‘Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Pakistan’, dated 1 March 2013, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women expressed deep concern at reports of ‘... on-going violent attacks and public threats on female students, teachers and professors by various non-State actors, as well as the escalating number of attacks on educational institutions, in particular a large number of girls’ only schools, which has disproportionately affected girls and women’s access to education. The Committee expresses its deep concern at recent attacks on school buses targeting children, including girls.’ **[79g] (paragraph 27)**
- 24.93 Reporting on armed groups, including the Taliban, al Qaeda and affiliated groups, targeting students, teachers and schools, Human Rights Watch (HRW) stated on 19 October 2012 that it had:

‘... collected reports of 96 school attacks in Pakistan this year alone. Most of these attacks took place in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (KP) and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) bordering Afghanistan. Fourteen attacks were

reported from Mohmand Agency in the tribal areas. Dozens of attacks were reported from various districts of KP. Thirteen schools were attacked in Swabi district, 12 in Charsadda district, and 11 in Mardan district. Schools have also been attacked in Balochistan and Sindh provinces. The United Nations reported 152 incidents of partial or complete destruction of school facilities in FATA and KP in 2011.' [71]

- 24.94 HRW also cited the case of schoolgirl Malala Yousufzai, an outspoken advocate for children's right to education, who was shot and wounded by the Pakistani Taliban on 9 October 2012. Adding 'Just three days later, at least three Shia university students – both male and female – were critically hurt when extremists threw acid at their faces while they were on their way home to Parachinar, in FATA, after taking exams in Kohat, KP. According to a local nongovernmental organization, this was the first such "acid throwing case" in FATA. The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan also claimed responsibility for this attack.' [71]
- 24.95 The SPARC Report 2011 stated that 'According to media reports, over the last two years, a total of 710 schools have been destroyed or damaged by the militants in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa... The Malakand division was worst hit as a total of 640 schools were destroyed in this region while 70 institutions were destroyed or damaged in various other districts across the province.' [741f] (p54)
- 24.96 On 13 August 2012, the UN General Assembly published a summarised 'Compilation [of reports] prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/2 – Pakistan' for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated 'Most schools have been targeted, although girls' schools are often singled out. Public threats made by leading Taliban members of attacks on all girls' schools led to the closure of 900 government and private schools, denying access to education for 120,000 female students. A UNDP Human Development Report noted that more than 50 per cent of young people speaking Baluchi or Saraiki have received less than four years of education.' [83c] (paragraph 61)
- 24.97 The HRCP Report 2012 stated 'More than 14 schools were bombed in Peshawar and FATA [Federally Administered Tribal Areas] by terrorists. The bombed schools included one middle school, 4 boys' schools, 3 girls' schools and six primary schools.' [27b] (p62)
- 24.98 Amnesty International noted in its report 'As If Hell Fell On Me': The Human Rights Crisis in Northwest Pakistan, published 10 June 2010, that:
- 'The Taleban targeted schools teaching the national curriculum, and in particular, the few operating schools for women and girls both in the NWFP and FATA throughout 2008 and 2009. According to statistics from the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, 165 schools were destroyed in NWFP and FATA in 2008, 136 of them girls' schools; and more than 180 schools were destroyed and 318 were partially destroyed in 2009.
- 'In Darra Adam Khel, a Frontier Region, a 25-year-old man told Amnesty International in late 2008 that the Taleban had warned parents not to send their girls to school and later attacked the schools: "First they warned owners of private schools to end co-education. Then they told the government's girls" schools to close. When they refused, the Taleban bombed several of them and the rest of the schools were closed for fear of bombing. At

the same time, parents also stopped sending their children to schools for fear of the Taleban.’ **[13e] (p42)**

24.99 The same source added:

‘One of the most devastating attacks on female education came in the Swat area. There, in 2008 and early 2009, as the Taleban consolidated their grip on the area, they destroyed more than 170 schools, including more than 100 girls’ schools. These attacks disrupted the education of more than 50,000 pupils, from primary to college level, according to official estimates. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan estimated that after the imposition of the Nizam-e-Adl Regulation in April 2009, around 4,000 schools providing education to over 40,000 girls were shut down.’ **[13e] (p42)**

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Madrasahs

24.100 On the availability and services by madrasahs (religious schools) the USSD IRF Report 2012 noted that:

‘Private schools run by Islamic clerics, or madrasahs, vary greatly in their curriculum and character. In some rural communities government schools may be in poor condition or far away, making madrasahs the only form of education available to poor students. By law, madrasahs are prohibited from teaching sectarian or religious hatred or encouraging sectarian or religious violence. In practice, however, hardline clerics who preach intolerance toward other sects are common, and in recent years, a small yet influential number of madrasahs have taught violent extremist doctrine in support of terrorism in violation of the law. In an attempt to curb the spread of extremism, the 2002 Madrasah Registration Ordinance requires all madrasahs to register with one of the five independent boards (wafaqs) or directly with the government, cease accepting foreign financing, and accept foreign students only with the consent of their governments. According to the Ministry of Religious Affairs, as of December 31, 2010, 19,421 madrasahs had been registered. However, many civil society organizations and education experts disputed the number of madrasahs operating across the country. According to the Ittehad Tanzeem ul Madaris Pakistan (IMTP), a council consisting of the heads of the five major wafaqs, there are approximately 25,000-30,000 registered madrasahs.’ **[3p] (Section II)**

24.101 On 13 August 2012, the UN General Assembly published a summarised ‘Compilation [of reports] prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/2 – Pakistan’ for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated:

‘CRC [Committee on the Rights of the Child] regretted that there was still a large number of unregistered madrasahs and that the introduction of secular subjects in the curricula has only been partially implemented. Furthermore, it was deeply concerned at reports of violence, ill-treatment, corporal punishment, sexual abuse and illegal detention within madrasahs and of madrasahs being used for military training. CRC and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict called on the Government to strengthen its current efforts to address the recruitment of children into armed groups and their use in hostilities. The United Nations

Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) reported an increase in recruitments of children from schools for training as suicide bombers.’ **[83c] (paragraph 59)**

24.102 The USSD Report 2012 stated that ‘Parents of lower economic means sometimes chose to send children to madrassahs, where they received free room and board...’ **[3n] (Section 6)**

24.103 In regards to madrassahs fuelling terrorism, the HRCP Report 2010 stated that:

‘The general perception, both international and national, that madrassa[s] stoke militancy was called into question by a Brookings Institution report, which states that madrassas “appear not to be a major risk factor” in propagating militancy. The report says that fewer than 10% of Pakistani students attended madrassas and the real cause of militancy in the country was the poor public education system. The report’s co-author Rebecca Winthrop, a Brookings fellow, said that the number of militant madrassas was not increasing, and that most Pakistani parents preferred not to send their children to school at all rather than enroll them in madrassas. The Wafaq-ul-Madaris also announced a campaign against the “negative propaganda” of different forces against madrassas, inviting the authorities and civil society to visit madrassas and see for themselves how beneficial religious seminaries in fact are.’ **[27e] (p265)**

24.104 The USSD Country Reports on Terrorism 2010, published 18 August 2011, stated that ‘A school in Malakand, run by the Pakistani army, continued to rehabilitate Taliban-influenced youth. The UN Children’s Fund-funded school, originally opened in September 2009, provided free religious education and psychiatric counseling to 85 students from Swat, a district heavily influenced by terrorist groups. The students were 13 to 18 years old and few had finished secondary school. The project is the first of its kind in Pakistan.’ **[3d] (Chapter 2. Country Reports: South and Central Asia Overview)**

24.105 The HRCP Report 2011 observed that:

‘As for madrassa reforms, a project started in General Musharraf’s era, there appeared to be little headway during the tenure of the current government. According to the federal minister for religious affairs, there was increased registration of madrassas. He claimed that up to August 10,973 madrassas had been registered. He stated that while negotiations were in process with the Ittehad-e-Tanzeemat-e-Madaris Pakistan, an umbrella organisation of madrassas in the country, worthwhile results had not been achieved, especially pertaining to rationalisation of the syllabus and mainstreaming of the madrassas two of the fundamental objectives of the madrassa reform project.

‘In an appalling incident at Madrassa Zakariya in Sohrab Goth, Karachi on December 13, police recovered 45 students in shackles from the basement of the madrassa. The police had raided the seminary after an anonymous tip-off. The chained students included boys as young as 12 and were mainly of Pakhtun origin. The children complained of regular beatings and being hung upside down. The madrassa staff claimed that they had chained the students because they were drug addicts and they were admitted there with their parents’ consent for the purposes of rehabilitation. One of the students was reported to have claimed they were brought there to be trained for battle by the Taliban. Subsequently, the federal interior minister declared that seminaries not registered with the Tanzeemul Madaris by January 1, 2012 would be

considered illegal. According to the minister, there were 24,000 registered seminaries in the country.’ **[27g] (p177)**

24.106 The USSD IRF Report 2011, published 30 July 2012, stated that:

‘On October 7, 2010, the Ministry of the Interior signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the IMTP [Ittehad Tanzeem ul Madaris Pakistan]. The agreement requires the madrassahs to teach secular subjects, to refrain from teaching or publishing literature promoting militancy or extremism, and to establish an independent board to monitor madrassah education. In return, the government would recognize madrassah graduation certificates. The agreement was to be followed by legislation at the federal level. Following the devolution of the Federal Ministry of Education to the provinces in May, the legislation stalled and the provinces were tasked with preparing recommendations for reforming the madrassah system.’ **[3p] (Section II)**

24.107 The USCIRF Report 2010 noted that:

‘A significant minority of Pakistan’s thousands of religious schools, or madrassas, reportedly continue to provide ongoing ideological training and motivation to those who take part in religiously-motivated violence in Pakistan and abroad. In mid-2005, the Pakistani central government required all madrassas to register with the government and expel all foreign students. While most registered, the registration process reportedly has had little if any effect on the curricula, which in many of these schools includes materials that promote intolerance and exhortations to violence. The government also still lacks controls on the madrassas’ sources of funding. A memorandum of understanding was signed in October 2010 between the Ministry of Interior, which oversees the madrassas system, and the five main madrassas boards in another attempt to better regulate their curriculum and financing.’ **[53b] (p118)**

24.108 On students subjected to abuse in madrassas, the HRCP Report 2010 stated ‘Conditions at many madrassas remained extremely dismal and corporal punishment was a common practice. Reports from Multan, Attock, Peshawar and other areas stated that children were subjected to torture and sexual abuse on a regular basis.’ **[27e] (p265)**

24.109 Cable News Network (CNN) reported on 13 December 2011 that 54 men and 14 boys, some as young as eight years old, were rescued from a madrassa and drug rehabilitation facility in a suburb of Karachi, where they were found chained together in an underground room. The Islamic religious school was registered with the government. **[77a]**

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Health and welfare

24.110 The SPARC Report 2012 stated that ‘The current political and economic scenario has impeded Pakistan’s progress towards the health related MDGs [Milliennium Development Goals]. Slow economic growth, a mounting energy crisis; military operation against militants and humanitarian disasters brought about by two years of consecutive flooding severely hampered government efforts to achieve the MDG 2015 targets.’ **[71a] (p95 – Health)**

24.111 The HRCP Report 2012 recorded that:

‘The Economic Survey of Pakistan 2011-2012 reported that the country lagged behind other South Asian countries in terms of the infant mortality rate, which was 63.26 deaths per 1,000 births, and the under-five year mortality rate at 86.5 per 1,000 live births. There was a marginal decline in both compared to the preceding year but it was still inadequate to meet the Millennium Development Goals. Pakistan Medical Association blames low expenditure on the health sector for the dismal state of health in Pakistan and has recommended that at least six percent of the GDP should be spent on health.’
[27b] (p179)

24.112 The HRCP Report 2011 also noted that ‘According to the UN, up to 10 million children suffer from malnutrition in Pakistan. Nearly 3.5 million children are affected by acute malnutrition, and another 1.4 million by severe acute malnutrition, weakening their immune system and often causing death.’ **[27b] (p180)**

24.113 UNICEF noted in its Pakistan Annual Report 2011 that:

- ‘1,200 Pakistani children under five years of age die every day.
- More than half of child deaths occur in the first month of life.
- 276 out of every 100,000 women who give birth die of causes related to pregnancy or childbirth.
- Only 39 per cent of births are attended by trained birth attendants, contributing to these high mortality rates.
- In 2011, 198 cases of polio were reported in Pakistan – the highest in the world.
- 35 per cent of child deaths are linked to malnutrition and 60 per cent are due to diseases related to water and sanitation.
- More than 40 per cent of children under five are stunted; only 8 per cent of children aged 6–24 months receive a minimum diet nation-wide.
- Only 34 per cent of rural Pakistanis have access to improved sanitation.’
[72c] (p2 – Fast facts)

24.114 The SPARC Report 2012 noted ‘One of the most alarming indications of the health crisis facing children is the increase in Polio, Measles and malnutrition. It is projected that in the absence of rigorous policy and administrative initiatives, Pakistan could face a Polio epidemic along with an increase in malnutrition and stunting rates given the dismal state of the economy.’ **[71a] (p95 – Health)**

24.115 The Child Aid Association (CAA), accessed 14 February 2012, a voluntary organisation working within the paediatric oncology unit at the National Institute for Child Health, Karachi, provided free treatment to underprivileged child cancer patients. **[81a]**

24.116 The HRCP Report 2009 noted that ‘According to the Pakistan Medical Association (PMA), substance abuse amongst street children reached alarming levels – children were found hooked to glue, paint and petrol sniffing and this became a serious problem in the bigger cities. There were around 14,000 street children in Karachi who were addicted to glue sniffing, thus risking damage to their brain, kidneys, liver, heart and myocardium.’ **[27c] (p218)**

Basic statistical information can be obtained on the [United Nations Children’s Fund \(UNICEF\) website](#).

See also Section: [Medical Issues](#), [Disability](#) and Women: [Women's health](#)

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Documentation

24.117 The USSD Report 2012 noted, for Pakistan, that:

'Citizenship is derived by birth in the country; however, for children born abroad after 2000, citizenship can be derived by descent, if either the mother or the father is a citizen and the child is registered with the proper authorities... [see paragraph 25.131 for an exception regarding Afghan refugees]

'Reporting of births is voluntary, and records are not kept uniformly, particularly in rural areas where children are born at home. In lieu of a birth certificate, individuals often used school records attested to by the headmaster or principal of the school or matriculation certificates, both of which identify the father and the date of birth. NADRA [National Database and Registration Authority] issues identity documents, including birth certificates, and uses mobile teams to register children in rural areas. The number of unregistered births was not available. While the government reported that more than 75 percent of the population was registered, actual figures may be lower. Public services, such as education and health care, were available to children without a birth certificate.' **[3n] (Section 6)**

24.118 A Child Registration Certificate (CRC) should be issued to every Pakistani child aged 18 years or under and includes '...the minor's name and registration number, date of birth, place of birth, gender, and parents' names and CNIC numbers. The Child is allotted [the] same registration number when he/she applies for CNIC upon attaining 18 years of age. It is the responsibility of every child's parents/guardians to get registered the children under 18 years of age [sic].' (Report to UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, 4 January 2008) **[79b] (paragraph 174)**

24.119 The National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), accessed 16 November 2012, provided information on the procedure for obtaining a Child Registration Certificate. NADRA noted that to obtain a CRC, no documents were required for child applicants under the age of ten years, and a birth or school certificate was required for children aged over ten years. **[29s]**

24.120 The SPARC Report 2011 noted that 'The National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) will include children with unknown parentage in its database under the names of their guardians. In this regard, a senior NADRA official stated that registration of children with unknown parents was essential as it was impossible for the authority to ascertain the exact number of abandoned children in the country unless they were registered in the NADRA database...' **[71b] (p16)**

24.121 The Pakistan government Directorate General of Immigration and Passports website, accessed 20 May 2013, noted that ordinary machine readable passports were issued to Pakistani citizens aged under 18, providing the relevant documents were submitted on application. **[29a] (Ordinary passport)**

24.122 The USSD Report 2012 cited that:

'Since 1979 the government has provided temporary protection to millions of refugees from Afghanistan. According to the UNHCR, at year's end an estimated 1.66 million registered Afghan refugees remained in the country, while another 83,423 voluntarily repatriated to Afghanistan. Two additional Voluntary Repatriation Centers became operational in March in Bannu and Timergara in KP, but the government closed the Bannu center in August due to security concerns. There were no credible estimates of how many Afghans were undocumented or unregistered, but estimates put the number at more than one million. The law states that anyone born in the country is a citizen. However, the courts' interpretation of this law was that the principle of birth in the country could not be read in isolation and independently of the other sections of the act concerning citizenship by descent in the case of the children of Afghan refugees. The courts decided that due to the "temporary" nature of Afghans' presence in the country, the law would not apply to the Afghan population, and Afghan children therefore were not granted Pakistani citizenship. Under the Secure Card for Afghan Citizens project, the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) issued birth certificates to 776, 683 Afghan children below the age of 18, identifying them as Afghan citizens.' **[3n]** **(Section 2d)**

See also [Citizenship and nationality](#), and Foreign refugees: [Afghan refugees](#)

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25. Trafficking

Overview

25.01 The US Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report 2013 (USSD TIP Report 2012), published on 19 June 2013, noted in its section on Pakistan that the government: '... does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. Despite these measures, the government still showed insufficient political will and capacity to address trafficking fully, as evidenced by ineffective law enforcement measures, the punishment of trafficking victims, and limited efforts in trafficking prevention. Government officials' complicity in human trafficking was a persistent, serious problem.' **[3e]**

Trafficking to and from Pakistan

25.02 The USSD TIP Report 2013 stated that:

'Pakistan is a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking... There are reports of child sex trafficking between Iran and Pakistan, and of Pakistani children and adults with disabilities who are forced to beg in Iran... Women and girls are also sold into forced marriages; in some cases their new "husbands" move them across Pakistan's land borders and force them into prostitution in Iran or Afghanistan... Non-state militant groups kidnap children or coerce parents into giving away children as young as nine with fraudulent promises or threats and then force the children to spy, fight, or die as suicide bombers in Pakistan and Afghanistan.' **[3e]**

25.03 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) recorded in its State of Human Rights in 2008 report (HRCP Report 2008), published 1 April 2009, that:

'At the beginning of the year, the federal ministry for human rights acknowledged the seriousness of trafficking of young girls to the Gulf States by organised groups. These groups posed as promoters of cultural events abroad and hired numerous girls from all over the country, especially Lahore and Karachi, and usually took them to Dubai to perform in dramas, musical events and other such affairs. However, these women could be sold off for sexual purposes once they reached the destination. The girls were sometimes as young as 10-11-year-old. A majority of the families, who became aware of their girls' fate, chose silence to avoid shame and disgrace, which made it harder to identify and apprehend the culprits.' **[27a] (p126, Women: Trafficking of women)**

25.04 The HRCP stated in its report, the State of Human Rights in 2009 (HRCP Report 2009), published February 2010, that 'If newspaper reports are to be believed, the trafficking of children for camel races in Dubai has been eliminated. The Punjab government acquired land measuring 3.5 acres in Rahim Yar Khan to build a child protection institute at a cost of Rs. [Rupees] 40 million. As many as 450 camel jockeys were said to have been brought back to Rahim Yar Khan since 2005.' **[27c] (p75)**

25.05 However, on 29 November 2010 UCA News reported that a survey undertaken by the charity Caritas Pakistan suggested camel jockey trafficking continued. The report noted '...poor children in the country are increasingly vulnerable to exploitation and abuse as camel jockeys and are in need of protection. "Most of the children, aged six to nine years, were smuggled as camel jockeys out of the country,"...' The survey indicated '...that the victims' families are mostly poor laborers and farmers in southern Punjab and Sindh provinces.' **[114a]**

See also subsection: [Assistance to victims of trafficking](#)

Trafficking within Pakistan

25.06 In its 'Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Pakistan', dated 1 March 2013, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women expressed concern at reports '... indicating that children, in particular girls who are internally trafficked are subject to bonded labour, domestic servitude and child marriages. It is also concerned at the lack of statistical data and information about the extent of women's and girls' exploitation for the purpose of prostitution.' **[79g] (paragraph 23)**

25.07 On the subject of internal trafficking, the USSD TIP Report 2013 noted that:

'The country's largest human trafficking problem is bonded labor, in which traffickers or recruiters exploit an initial debt assumed by a worker as part of the terms of employment, which sometimes persist through generations. Bonded labor is concentrated in the Sindh and Punjab provinces, but also takes place in the Balochistan and Khyber Paktunkhwa provinces, in agriculture and brick-making and to a lesser extent in the mining, carpet-making, and fishing industries. In some cases, when bonded laborers attempt to escape or seek legal redress, police return them to the landowners and brick kiln owners who then hold laborers and their families, including children, in chains in private jails. Boys and girls as young as five years old are bought, sold, rented, or kidnapped and placed in organized begging rings, domestic servitude, small shops and factories, and prostitution, according to child rights experts; NGOs report that boys are particularly vulnerable to sex trafficking, particularly around hotels, truck stops, bus stations, and shrines. Illegal labor agents charge high recruitment fees to parents for giving work to their children, who are subsequently subjected to forced labor and sometimes forced into prostitution. Trafficking experts describe a structured

system for forcing women and girls into prostitution, including the presence of physical markets in which victims are offered for sale.’ **[3e] (Pakistan)**

See Section: Children: [Violence against children](#) and [Child labour](#)

Further information on internal trafficking can be found in the Aurat Foundation report dated December 2012, [Internal trafficking of women and girls in Pakistan – A research study](#). **[57f]**

Prosecution

25.08 The USSD TIP Report 2013 observed that:

‘The Government of Pakistan continued to prosecute human trafficking offenses over the last year. The government does not prohibit and penalize all forms of trafficking. Several sections in the penal code criminalize some forms of human trafficking, such as slavery, selling a child for prostitution, and unlawful compulsory labor, prescribing punishments for these offenses that range from fines to life imprisonment. Transnational trafficking in persons offenses, as well as some non-trafficking crimes – such as people smuggling and fraudulent adoption – are prohibited through the Prevention and Control of Human Trafficking Ordinance, 2002 (PACHTO), which prescribes penalties of seven to 14 years’ imprisonment. Prescribed penalties for the penal code and PACHTO offenses are sufficiently stringent and commensurate with those prescribed for other serious crimes, such as rape. The Bonded Labor System (Abolition) Act (BLSA) prohibits bonded labor, with prescribed penalties ranging from two to five years’ imprisonment, a fine, or both. Pakistani officials have yet to secure a conviction under this law. Under the devolution process that started in 2010, federal laws apply to provinces until corresponding provincial laws are enacted; as of the reporting period, only Punjab has adopted such a law.’ **[3e] (Pakistan: Prosecution)**

25.09 The same source added:

‘The government reported that penal code provisions were used approximately 80 times to prosecute trafficking cases from April 2012 to March 2013, compared with 55 times in 2011. Government officials continued to conflate human smuggling and human trafficking, and the Federal Investigative Agency’s (FIA) anti-trafficking units dealt with undocumented migration and smuggling, in addition to human trafficking. During 2012, the government reported that it convicted trafficking offenders under PACHTO; however, since PACHTO also prohibits non-trafficking offenses and some government officials conflated trafficking and smuggling, the actual number of convicted trafficking offenders is unknown. Many police and prosecutors did not pursue trafficking cases or simply did not prioritize anti-trafficking activities.’ **[3e] (Pakistan: Prosecution)**

Assistance to victims of trafficking

25.10 The USSD TIP Report 2013 stated that:

‘The Government of Pakistan did not make progress in the protection of victims of human trafficking during the reporting period. Pakistani authorities did not have systematic methods for identifying trafficking victims among vulnerable populations and referring them to protective services.

'NGOs reported that government officials often detained, fined, or jailed trafficking victims. For example, rural police were inclined to return "runaway" bonded laborers to brick kiln and landowners on the grounds that they tried to avoid repayment of debts. Undocumented foreign nationals were detained and charged under the penal code regardless of whether they had been subjected to human trafficking. Authorities detained returning Pakistani adults and boys, some of whom were trafficking victims, for having left the country illegally. Victims of sex trafficking were often charged with crimes, while their traffickers remained free. Various government-run jail-like facilities that did not allow women to leave without a male relative or a court order, commonly called "women's shelters," were available to female trafficking victims; there were not only reports of abuse and severe lack of freedom of movement in these centers, but also allegations that staff and police sold some women unclaimed by their families to men under the guise of marriage. Some child trafficking victims received shelter or other protective services through broad child protection programs and centers offered by provincial governments, although there was no information on how many victims were assisted.' **[3e] (Pakistan: Protection)**

25.11 The USSD Report 2009 reported that:

'In 2005 the central government opened a model shelter in Islamabad specifically for trafficking victims. There are more than 200 shelters around the country providing services to trafficking victims, including government-run camps in Sindh for released bonded laborers. During the year the government of Punjab initiated a project to eliminate bonded labor in brick kilns in Lahore and Kasur districts. The government of Sindh also initiated a project at the end of 2008 to distribute state land to poor laborers, with a focus on women, in efforts to reduce bonded labor practices. The federal government also provided temporary residence status to foreign victims of trafficking.' **[3b] (Section 6)**

See also Sections: Women: [Assistance available to women](#); and [Children](#)

25.12 With regards to the prevention of trafficking, the USSD TIP Report 2013 noted that:

'The Pakistani government made only limited efforts to prevent human trafficking during the year. The FIA reportedly placed anti-trafficking posters at airports and border crossings to raise awareness of transnational trafficking. Many of the district vigilance committees charged with curbing bonded labor and mandated by law continued to be either inactive or ineffectual. Under the government's devolution process, which started in 2010, labor regulation and other civil matters, as well as social service delivery, were devolved from the central government to provincial jurisdictions, which often did not have the financial resources and technical capacity to carry them out; this hampered the government's overall efforts to effectively address forced labor and to provide protective services to trafficking victims. There was no information on whether Pakistani forces deployed to UN peacekeeping missions received training on combating human trafficking prior to their deployment abroad. The government's efforts to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts by arresting some clients of prostitution were mitigated by the government's punishing of females in prostitution without ensuring that they were not victims of trafficking. Pakistan is not a party to the 2000 UN TIP Protocol.' **[3e] (Pakistan: Prevention)**

25.13 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) stated in its annual report, the State of human rights 2010, published 14 April 2011, (HRCP Report 2010), that 'The SC [Supreme Court] directed the authorities (June 11) to take immediate steps to stop the

trafficking of children from Pakistan to Gulf states for employment as camel jockeys. The court had taken suo motu notice of the inhuman practice. The court also ordered immediate payment of compensation money to the children who had been used earlier as camel kids.' [27e] (p59)

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26. Medical issues

Overview of availability of medical treatment and drugs

- 26.01 IRIN reported on 17 May 2013 that 'Health care in Pakistan is identified as one of the country's most corrupt sectors, according to surveys by Transparency International; general surveys suggest the majority of Pakistanis are unhappy with the health services they are offered.' IRIN cited a report published in The Lancet, which stated 'Pakistan has no national health insurance system and 78 percent of the population pay health care expenses themselves. It is the only country in the world without a National Health Ministry.' [41g]
- 26.02 On 13 August 2012, the UN General Assembly published a summarised 'Compilation [of reports] prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/2 – Pakistan' for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated 'UNCT [United Nations Country Team] stated that the overall budget for the health sector has never exceeded more than 1.0 per cent of GDP with a decline to 0.7 per cent in 2009. There is also a shortage of qualified health personnel, particularly female health-care providers, along with capacity deficits.' [83c] (paragraph 53)
- 26.03 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan recorded in its annual report, the State of Human Rights in 2011 (HRCP Report 2011), published March 2012, that 'In the fiscal year 2010-2011, the health budget was as low as 0.23 percent of the federal budget, the lowest in over ten years. Of that, 47 percent went unutilised by the end of the year although there was no explanation of how this came to be. According to unofficial sources, corruption in the health sector was the cause of much wastage.' The same source added that:
- 'According to government statistics, there is one doctor for every 1,222 people in the country, one dentist for 16,854 people, and one hospital bed to 1,701 people. According to the Economic Survey of Pakistan 2010-2011, the target set for the national health policy was to increase the number of doctors by 5,000, dentists by 450, and have another 35,000 nurses, 5,500 paramedics and 500 traditional health attendants. For rural areas, there were to be 14 new Rural Health Centres (RHCs), 40 new Basic Health Units (BHUs) and the upgrade of 45 RHCs and 900 BHUs.' [27g] (p226)
- 26.04 The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) noted in its article 'Pakistan: Healthcare and Pharmaceuticals Report', dated 1 April 2012 that 'The private sector has around 20,000 clinics, 520 hospitals, 300 maternity and child-health centres, 340 dispensaries and 450 diagnostic centres. The average private hospital has 30 beds.' [2a]
- 26.05 The same source added 'The healthcare sector is undeveloped, with almost one-half of the population lacking access to primary healthcare. Most people will continue to rely on

traditional doctors for treatment. Healthcare will remain far more readily available in urban areas, where the majority of doctors and hospitals are concentrated. Healthcare in rural areas is often sought from hakims (traditional healers), who have little or no formal medical training.’ **[2a]**

26.06 The website [Medics Travel](#), accessed 9 May 2013, published a list of medical institutes in Pakistan. **[22]** Further information on medical facilities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi is provided by the [US Embassy, Islamabad](#), accessed 10 August 2011. **[56a]**

26.07 The USSD’s Consular Information Sheet on Pakistan, last updated 31 August 2012, reported that:

‘Adequate basic non-emergency medical care is available in major Pakistani cities, but is limited in rural areas. Facilities in the cities vary in level and range of services, resources, and cleanliness... Effective emergency response to personal injury and illness is virtually non-existent in Pakistan. Ambulances are few and are not necessarily staffed by medical personnel... generic brands from well-known pharmaceuticals usually are [available]. The quality of the locally-produced medications is uneven.’ **[3] (Medical facilities and health information)**

26.08 The HRCP Report 2009 also provided basic information on the condition of some of Pakistan’s hospitals. **[27c] (p255)**

26.09 The International Organization for Migration (IOM) recorded in its Information on Return and Reintegration in the Countries of Origin (IRRICO) factsheet for Pakistan, updated 4 January 2010, that:

‘Various professional bodies in Pakistan are concerned with medical resources and needs. They include the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC), the Pakistan Dental Association (PDA), and the College of Physicians and Surgeons (CPSP). In addition, the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) was established to meet the increasing demand for the diagnosis, management and prevention of cardiovascular diseases, as well as to keep up to date with the rapid technological advances in the field through research and development. Likewise, the implementation of the National Programme for Family Planning and Primary Health Care is a timely and much-needed response to the health care needs of the rural communities in the country. The Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital & Research Centre (SKMCH&RC) has been providing comprehensive care, free of charge, to thousands of homeless cancer patients. Health care services across the country have visibly increased. Basic Health Units (BHU), Rural Health Centres (RHC), and civil dispensaries have been created in the remote rural areas to meet the health needs of the local communities. In the cities, there are both state and private hospitals with modern technologies to meet a variety of health needs.’ **[85a]**

26.10 However, on the affordability of healthcare, IRIN reported, on 9 February 2009, that:

‘More and more people are being denied health care simply because they cannot afford it. “Fewer and fewer people consult doctors. Fees have not gone up, but the cost of medicines is high, and even when they see a doctor they often cannot follow up on care, as medicines are beyond their budget,” said Waheed Sharif, a general practitioner in Lahore. As an example, he cited the case of a patient with high blood pressure who took the pills she is supposed to take each day only once a week “because that’s all she can afford”.’ **[41c]**

26.11 The same source added:

‘Amir Omair, an associate professor in the community health sciences department at Lahore’s Fatima Memorial Hospital College of Medicine and Dentistry, told Herald, the local monthly magazine, that people were now consulting doctors only when disease became acute, because of the financial burdens they faced. The Network for Consumer Protection, an Islamabad-based NGO [non-governmental organisation], which conducted a detailed survey in 2004 on the pricing of drugs and access to them, found “public health facilities had extremely low availability of essential medicines” while “medicines for common treatments were unaffordable and out of reach to the poor when purchased in the private sector”.’ **[41c]**

26.12 The EIU noted on 8 April 2011 that the average cost of a routine check-up with a family doctor, or a single xray at a doctor’s office or hospital, cost over 65 per cent of the average Pakistani’s monthly personable disposable income. **[2a]**

26.13 The HRCP Report 2008 stated that:

‘Throughout the year there were reports that facilities at state-owned hospitals were poor. A common complaint was that doctors were not present at their posts. The main reason was that doctors were holding jobs at both private and public hospitals. Service at private hospitals was preferred because of the higher monetary incentives available there. There were also many reports of the non-availability of basic medicines, such as anti-rabies medication at public hospitals.’ **[27a] (p171, Health: Existing Services)**

26.14 The same source added that ‘Pakistan continues to lag behind in the provision of critical care medicine which could be provided by private hospitals. This includes the treatment of asthma attacks, severe infections, complicated deliveries, road traffic accidents and many other conditions that can cause the death of otherwise healthy persons within a few hours...’ **[27a] (p173, Health: Critical care)**

26.15 Pakistan’s Ministry of Health (accessed via the World Health Organization) provided a National Essential Drugs List, 2003 Third Edition. **[29m]** The International Organization for Migration’s Return and Reintegration in the Countries of Origin (IOM IRRICO) factsheet for Pakistan, updated 4 January 2010, stated that the list was ‘... of essential drugs (as defined by the World Health Organisation) that satisfies the health care needs of the majority of the population. It is approved by the government with the aim that all the medications listed should be available at all times in adequate dosage in hospitals, clinics and pharmacies.’ **[85a]**

26.16 The website PakMediNet, accessed 27 June 2013, also provides a database of drugs available in Pakistan. **[97]**

26.17 The HRCP Report 2009 stated ‘It was a common experience that from time to time some essential drugs were in short supply in the market thereby putting the lives of patients in jeopardy.’ **[27c] (p260)**

26.18 Correspondence to the UK Border Agency, dated 13 October 2008, from UNHCR via their partner agency SACH (Struggle for Change) stated that:

‘Foreign patients are not entitled for [sic] free medicines/consultation/tests/medication etc [in Pakistan]. National laws do not give any indication or provision to provide free treatment to foreign patients.

'Free services are available to residents of Pakistan who either possess the Zakat form attested from the area counselor or to government employees. Other categories of Pakistan nationals have to bear medicine cost, not available in hospital, and surgical item cost. Vaccination and family planning measures are available to all free of cost. Basic Health units and central health units... provid[e]... free of cost treatment for minor ailment[s], and free obstetric care is provided to Pakistan nationals and to Afghan nationals in North West Frontier Province of Pakistan.

'[The] North West Frontier provincial government hospitals do entertain Afghan nationals for health care in their government hospitals but [most have] to pay for medicines and surgical items.' **[40a]**

See also Sections: [Women's health](#), and Children: [Health and welfare](#)

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HIV/AIDS – anti-retroviral treatment

- 26.19 The Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) noted in its report 'The State of Pakistan's Children 2012' (SPARC Report 2012), published May 2013, that, according to UNAIDS, there are an estimated 96,000 people living with HIV in Pakistan, with an increasing prevalence among Injected Drug Users (IDUs) and commercial sex workers. **[71a] (p110)**
- 26.20 The same source added 'There are seven centers for the Prevention of Parent to Child Transmission of HIV (PPTCT): two each in Lahore and Karachi, and one each in Islamabad, Peshawar and Quetta. They provide diagnosis, free antiretroviral treatment (ARV), and counseling, as well as referral services for mothers with HIV.' **[71a] (p111)**
- 26.21 The SPARC Report 2011 stated that, in 2011, '... the first ever Family Care Center for HIV/AIDS patients of Pakistan was established in the Hayatabad Medical Complex in Peshawar... The center will cater to the needs of all HIV patients with a special focus on the treatment of women and children.' **[71b] (p111)**

See also Women: [Women's health](#) and Children: [Health and welfare](#)

- 26.22 The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, reported that:
- 'Societal attitudes toward HIV-positive individuals were changing, but social discrimination continued. Cases of discrimination often went unreported due to the stigma faced by HIV/AIDS patients. In addition to operating treatment centers, the National Aids Control Program held rallies and public campaigns and spoke in mosques about birth control and AIDS awareness. The Ministry of Health established 13 HIV treatment and care centers nationwide, which provided comprehensive HIV care services.' **[3n] (Section 6)**
- 26.23 The HRCP Report 2011 stated that:

'From being prevalent amongst injectable drug users and sex workers, the disease has spread to the rest of the population, to women and children, from transfusion. Data suggests that most of the infected population is younger than 25. There is still a lot of misinformation and social stigma attached to the immune system disorder which is considered to be a disease affecting homosexuals or those leading promiscuous lives. This keeps the disease under the wraps and the general misconception is that it is transmitted through touch exposes patients to social problems.' [27g] (p235)

Tuberculosis

26.24 The HRCP Report 2011 stated:

'TB detection has greatly improved over the last two years with a case detection rate of 74 percent and a treatment success rate of 91 percent. What is alarming is the prevalence amongst children, with the National Institute of Child Health, based in Islamabad, receiving 40-45 cases each month. Erratic immunisation, hereditary transmission and unhygienic living conditions were reportedly the cause for the affected children in poor families. According to the manager of the National Tuberculosis Control Programme, there are about 5,000 diagnostic clinics, laboratories, and treatment centres across the country with 800 private physicians engaged by the national programme in addition to those in the public sector.' [27g] (p234-235)

See also Children: [Health and welfare](#)

Cancer treatment

26.25 The News International reported on 14 June 2012 that:

'[The] Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) is in process of establishing four more cancer hospitals in the country to ensure treatment to patients through modern techniques and methods. These four facilities are in the final stages of completion and expected to start functioning at full capacity by the end of this month. Three of the facilities are being constructed in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa while one in Sindh province where out-patient departments have started working.

'... presently the commission is operating 14 modern cancer hospitals ... for diagnosis and treatment of cancerous and allied diseases, as well as national cancer awareness and prevention programmes.' [139b]

26.26 On 2 December 2005, the Aga Khan Development Network issued a press release which stated that:

'His Highness the Aga Khan, Chairman of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) and Chancellor of Aga Khan University (AKU) today inaugurated the US \$8.4 million Ibn Zuhr Building for Oncology Services at AKU's Karachi campus. The building... is a comprehensive cancer centre with state-of-the-art equipment, offering a wide range of facilities such as screening, diagnostic and treatment services, including high quality nuclear imaging, chemotherapy, radiation therapy, surgical oncology services, and cancer research facilities – all under one roof. The new addition to the 654-bed Aga Khan University Hospital (AKUH) in Karachi is the first of its kind in Sindh and will provide a much needed service in a country where five to ten percent of the population could suffer from cancer in their lifetime. At AKUH alone, approximately 12,000 patients are diagnosed with cancer each year. The Chancellor also expressed satisfaction that

services provided at the Ibn Zuhr Building will be accessible to those who cannot afford the full cost of their treatment, through the support of the University Hospital's Patient Welfare Programme.' [47]

- 26.27 Other hospitals with Oncology departments, websites accessed 13 September 2011, include:
- [Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences \(PIMS\)](#), Islamabad
 - [University of Health Sciences \(Jinnah Hospital\)](#), Lahore
 - [Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital and Research Centre](#), Lahore
- 26.28 In an article dated 30 July 2007 on hospice and palliative care in Pakistan, the Daily Times reported that 'There are no hospice at home programme[s] or palliative care unit[s] in the true sense in the Govt hospitals. There are [a] few NGO/Charitable organisations running cancer care centers and convalescent homes, but they too lack the palliative care support essence. In general most of the doctors and nurses lack specialized training in cancer pain management.' [55d]
- 26.29 The Child Aid Association (CAA), accessed 26 June 2013, a voluntary organisation working within the oncology department at the NICH [National Institute for Child Health], provided free medicines, support and specialist care to underprivileged child cancer patients. [81a]
- 26.30 An article in the International Network for Cancer Treatment and Research (INCTR) newsletter of winter 2003/4 stated, with regard to the availability of cancer treatment in Pakistan, that:
- 'Facilities for treatment of cancer patients are available in a few larger cities in both public and private hospitals. There are 18 radiotherapy centers with 65 practicing radiation oncologists; the quality of these centers is extremely variable depending on the expertise of the physician and available equipment. There are only 15 medical oncologists practicing in major cities. State-of-the-art surgical oncology is practiced in only a few hospitals, and as a result, the majority of patients undergo sub-optimal surgery. In Pakistan, profound differences exist with respect to the availability of medical care to different segments of the population. Good quality hospital care is available to the affluent class, either from a small number of excellent public sector hospitals, or from the private sector. The less affluent classes are provided free services in the government hospitals but again, the quality of these services is extremely variable, depending on the available resources and trained personnel. The financial burden of treatment is borne by the patients, which makes it difficult for the poor to receive state-of-the-art treatment. They are supported by monetary donations from individuals as well as government funds and Zakat, a tax that the more wealthy Muslims pay specifically to help the poor. These contributions tend to be insufficient and erratic. Clearly these resources are inadequate to deal with the ever increasing economic burden of cancer patients. It is estimated that fewer than 30% of patients receive the minimal recommended treatment for their disease.' [73]

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Kidney dialysis

26.31 The Noor Foundation UK, accessed 10 June 2013, stated that it:

‘... currently has twenty state of the art Kidney dialysis centres located along the length and breadth of Pakistan. We currently have centres in all five provinces, from Sindh and Balochistan provinces in the south, to Punjab, Azad Kashmir and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province which borders Afghanistan and China.

‘All our centres are housed in government hospitals and are managed on a day to day basis by our two sister NGO's in Pakistan, The Anjuman Felaho Behbood Insaniat (The Society for the betterment of humanity), and “The Noor Foundation Pakistan”.’ **[48]**

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Mental health

26.32 Dawn reported on 23 September 2012 that ‘... after the 18th constitutional amendment was passed in April 2010, the provision of psychiatric healthcare was devolved from the federation to the provinces in Pakistan. This constitutional amendment in effect abrogated the 2001 Mental Health Act which had been premised on federal (and not provincial) psychiatric regulatory institutions. At present, in practice there is no law which protects mentally disordered patients in Pakistan.’ The report noted that the government of Sindh was considering the Sindh Mental Health Bill of 2012. **[42d]**

26.33 The same source reported:

‘In the absence of meaningful mental health legislation in Pakistan, the current situation is that a person suffering from some mental disorder is almost completely at the mercy of his family, if they have one. In the majority of cases, it is the family that brings these patients for treatment to the doctor, or whoever graces that professional role, i.e. the spiritualist, the holy man, the mulla or the quack. Where involuntary admission to a psychiatric institution is required, the patient is coerced first into admission and then psychiatric treatment, by the family as well as institutional staff. There are currently no legal checks, protections or safeguards for the mentally disordered patient in any of these settings...’ **[42d]**

26.34 The New Statesman reported in an article dated 22 October 2008 ‘...90% of mental healthcare in Pakistan is private... On average, it costs between 600-1500 rupees to see a psychiatrist - half the salary of a low-paid worker... there are just 4000 – 5000 beds in psychiatric wards, serving a population of well over 160 million.’ **[93a]**

26.35 The HRCP Report 2011 recorded that:

‘According to media monitoring by HRCP, at least 2,131 people committed suicide in 2011, compared to 2,399 in 2010. The numbers amongst men were reported to be 1,420 in the year under review as compared to 1,678 in 2010. Another 723 men attempted suicides that did not result in death... **(p230)** According to the head of Department of Psychiatry at Agha Khan University in Karachi, perhaps a third of Pakistan’s population may be suffering from clinical depression. According to World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates, 15,000 people commit or attempt suicide in Pakistan every year.’ **[27e] (p231)**

26.36 The HRCP Report 2009 noted:

'According to the head of the institute [Institute of Psychiatry, Rawalpindi] neither the federal nor the provincial government gave any attention to the provision of health facilities to a large section of the country's population suffering from mental disorders and problems. A glaring example of the government's apathy in the matter was the construction of a new block of the institute on self-help basis. The institute published a brochure titled "Mental Health in Need of Your Wealth" to collect funds from the public. The institute, which was established in 1973, is providing mental health facilities to a large number of people, with patients coming from all four provinces of Pakistan.' **[27c] (p255)**

26.37 In an article on mental healthcare, dated 8 November 2007, Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) reported that 'According to Lahore's University of Health Sciences Vice-Chancellor Malik Hussain Mubashir, there is only one psychiatrist for every 10,000 people in Pakistan, one child psychiatrist for four million children estimated to be suffering mental-health issues and only four major psychiatric hospitals and 20 such units attached to teaching hospitals.' **[41b]**

26.38 The World Health Organisation's Mental Health Atlas 2005 for Pakistan stated that:

'The primary sources of mental health financing in descending order are out of pocket expenditure by the patient or family, tax based, social insurance and private insurances. The country has disability benefits for persons with mental disorders. Disability benefit is paid to individuals who are not able to work due to mental illness. Mental health is a part of primary health care system. Actual treatment of severe mental disorders is available at the primary level. The programme has initially started in Punjab, the largest province, in 1985 and is being extended to others over the years.

'There are many residential and day-care facilities, especially for people with learning disabilities providing social, vocational and educational activities. Regular training of primary care professionals is carried out in the field of mental health. Training programmes have started in the province of Punjab as a part of in-service training for primary care personnel. Till now, approximately 2000 primary care physicians and 42 000 primary care workers have been trained. Community activists from NGOs (e.g. National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) are also being trained. Though there are training programmes for physicians, nurses and psychologists, there are no such facilities for social workers. Mental health training has been included in the programme of the District Health Development Centres.

'The Institute of Psychiatry Rawalpindi Medical College was the first WHO collaborating Centre-EMR and is acting as a resource centre at national and regional level for training, services information system and research. Multiple training manuals for primary health care physicians, paramedics, community workers and teachers have been developed. In an additional training package on counselling skills for health professionals, a package for rehabilitation of mentally ill has been developed... There are community care facilities for patients with mental disorders. ..More than 78 junior psychiatrists have been trained in community mental health to act as resource persons in the development of programmes in their areas. The National Steering Committee evaluates the quality of care delivery on a regular basis.' **[14b]**

26.39 On health services for specific groups, including women and children, the report observed that:

'The country has specific programmes for mental health for refugees and children. NGOs are involved in service provision and advocacy for the above groups. Afghan refugees are being provided services by international organizations. There are also facilities for women and victims of torture. There are some facilities for children in the larger hospitals and regional hospitals, but the most parts of the country have no facilities for child and adolescent psychiatry. There are many residential and day care facilities for people with learning disabilities, especially in big cities. There is a school mental health programme and it aims to develop awareness of mental health among schoolchildren, schoolteachers and the community; to provide essential knowledge about mental health to teachers so that they are able to impart that to the students and are able to recognize and provide some counselling to the students for basic psychological problems...' [14b]

- 26.40 The Mental Health Atlas listed the following therapeutic drugs as generally being available at the primary health care level of the country: carbamazepine, phenobarbital, chlorpromazine, diazepam, haloperidol; imipramine (is supplied instead of amitriptyline); and procyclidine. [14b]

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27. Humanitarian issues

- 27.01 On 13 August 2012, the UN General Assembly published a summarised 'Compilation [of reports] prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/2 – Pakistan' for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated:

'CRC [Committee on the Rights of the Child] was concerned that the rates of relative and extreme poverty remained very high and that indicators on adequate housing, nutrition, water and sanitation, and sewage remained alarming. It noted with concern that a high percentage of the population currently faces severe food shortages and that half of the population lives below or just at the poverty line. UNICEF [United Nations Children's Fund] estimated that 36 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line. Many others live just above the poverty line, and are extremely vulnerable to shocks.

'UNCT [United Nations Country Team] noted that despite plans to alleviate poverty, the capacity to implement and impact at the local level remains an issue, food insecurity has increased and distributional inequalities persist with reports suggesting that around 60 per cent of the total population is facing food insecurity. WHO [World Health Organization] noted that malnutrition remains widespread and outcomes have not changed significantly over the last two decades.' [83c] (paragraph 51-52)

- 27.02 The Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS) noted in its section on Conflict Drivers, with regards to poverty in Pakistan, undated, that:

'Pakistan faces extreme food insecurity, which puts individual security in danger posing a threat to the security of the state, the region and ultimately the globe. According to conservative estimates, 63 percent of the poor in Pakistan are in the category of "transitory poor". The rest of the 32 percent and five percent of the population – subsisting below the poverty line – are "chronic" and "extremely poor", respectively.

Chronic and extremely poor are those households that are always below the poverty line. Similarly, on the other side, 13 percent and 21 percent of the total non-poor (above the poverty line) have been classified as “transitory vulnerable” and “transitory non-poor”, respectively... With most of the country’s resources directed to debt-servicing, the military and its ongoing campaigns against militants, very little is available to address chronic poverty in Pakistan.’ **[59c] (Poverty)**

See also [Economy](#), [Security situation](#) and Children: [Health and welfare](#)

Floods 2011/2012

27.03 The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported in its Situation Report No.6, Pakistan Monsoon 2012, dated 2 November 2012, that five million people were affected by the recent monsoon rains in the flood-affected areas of Balochistan, Punjab and Sindh. **[125b]**

27.04 The OCHA reported in its Situation Report No.1, Pakistan Monsoon 2011, dated 9 September 2011, that:

‘One year on from the devastating floods of 2010, Pakistan is again facing a rain-related emergency. The spell of monsoon rains that started in the second week of August 2011, evolved into a large-scale disaster, causing damage in various parts of the country. Sindh, however, remains by far the worst affected province. Government sources put the number of people affected to date at five million people mostly in the 22 out of 23 districts of Sindh province. To date, there are 199 confirmed deaths, according to the Sindh Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA). PDMA statistics show that over 222,941 individuals have been displaced to 2,243 camps in the province. The camps are housing people primarily in Government schools, buildings and makeshift-tented settlements. Nearly a million houses have been damaged or destroyed while thousands of livestock have also been lost. The loss of standing crops exceeds 1.59 million acres which further accentuates the vulnerability of the agrarian based communities, many of whom are still trying to recover from the 2010 floods. Many cities are flooded and the affected population is without access to electricity and essential services for extended periods of time.’ **[125a]**

See also [Internally Displaced Persons \(IDPs\)](#)

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28. Freedom of movement

28.01 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its annual report, ‘State of Human Rights in 2012’ (HRCP Report 2012), published March 2013, that:

‘The year 2012 witnessed frequent restrictions on the freedom of movement, both from state and non-state actors. The restrictions imposed by the state were mostly continuation of past practices and institutional barriers, which included banning of clerics from entering particular cities during the Shia mourning month of Moharram, and the customary reliance on the Exit Control List. The usual difficulties faced in the issuance of passports remained largely unaddressed. An agreement for a new and relaxed visa

regime between Pakistan and India remained unimplemented, causing immense difficulties to people who wished to travel to India.’ **[27b] (p91)**

28.02 The same source added:

‘In Moharram, the Punjab government barred 929 clerics from entering Punjab whereas 439 clerics were banned from making speeches. These bans were imposed ostensibly to prevent provocative speeches during the month of Moharram. Out of around 35 districts in Punjab, 19 were declared sensitive and 118,308 police officials were deployed throughout the province to provide security to Moharram processions. Similar bans were also imposed in Sindh in order to avoid any law and order situation and terrorist attacks as the Shia community took out processions throughout the country.’ **[27b] (p92-93)**

28.03 The HRCP Report 2012 observed that the security situation and outbreaks of violence in various cities and provinces restricted the safe passage of citizens across the country. **[27b] (p92-98)**

See also Security situation: [Sectarian violence](#)

28.04 In respect of freedom of movement within the country, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation, the US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, noted that the law provides for these rights, although the government limited them in practice. The report noted that ‘The law prohibits travel to Israel, and the country’s passports include a statement that they are “valid for all countries except Israel.” Government employees and students must obtain “no objection certificates” from the government before traveling abroad. This requirement rarely was enforced for students.’ **[3n] (Section 2d)**

28.05 The USSD Report 2012 also stated that:

‘The government cooperated with the UNHCR and other humanitarian organizations in providing protection and assistance to internally displaced persons, refugees, returning refugees, asylum seekers, and other persons of concern... The government’s restrictions on access to certain areas of FATA [Federally Administered Tribal Areas], KP [Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa], and Balochistan, often for security concerns, hindered the ability of humanitarian assistance providers to deliver aid to vulnerable populations...

‘Persons on the Exit Control List (ECL) were prohibited from foreign travel. Although the list was intended to prevent those with pending criminal cases from traveling abroad, no judicial action was required for the Ministry of Interior to add a name. The list sometimes was used to harass human rights activists or leaders of nationalist parties. Those on the list had the right to appeal to the courts for removal of their names.’ **[3n] (Section 2d)**

See also Section Exit/entry procedures: [Exit Control List](#)

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29. Internally displaced persons (IDPs)

29.01 The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) reported on 12 June 2013 that:

‘Counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency operations and violent clashes between non-state armed groups continue to lead to major, rapid movements of internally displaced people (IDPs) in Pakistan’s volatile north-west. Within the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Khyber and Kurram agencies are currently the worst-affected areas. More than 415,000 people were newly displaced in 2012, and at least 131,000 more have fled their homes since mid-March this year... There are now 1.1 million IDPs registered as displaced by conflict in the north-west, and many more are unregistered in the region and elsewhere...

‘An estimated five million people have been displaced by conflict, sectarian violence and wide-spread human rights abuses in the north-west as a whole since 2004. Disaster-induced displacement has been even more extensive. Around 15 million people were displaced across the country by three years of monsoon flooding between 2010 and 2012, and millions more by earthquakes and drought over the years...’ **[84a]**

- 29.02 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan report, the State of Human Rights in 2012 (HRCP Report 2012), published March 2013, noted:

‘By UNHCR estimates, there were 757,996 internally displaced persons (163,102 families) in Pakistan on account of conflict as of December 31, 2012. According to figures by Provincial Disaster Management Authority in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in the beginning of October, there were 623,832 displaced individuals in IDP camps and off-camp. The largest group (370,382) was from Khyber Agency. There were also 1,340 IDPs from Bajaur, 106,960 from Orakzai and 145,150 from Kurram region of FATA. The overwhelming majority was staying with host communities or off-camps. Out of the total, only 96,867 IDPs were staying in camps. The host areas / camps for the displaced were located in Hangu, Kohat, Kurram, Peshawar and Nowshera. The off-camp displaced families sought help and shelter from relatives in these cities while the more affluent ones rented housing there.’ **[27b] (p279)**

- 29.03 On 13 August 2012, the UN General Assembly published a summarised ‘Compilation [of reports] prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/2 – Pakistan’ for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated:

‘UNCT [United Nations Country Team] noted that sectarian violence has added new complexity to an environment fraught with insecurity causing displacements. Towards the end of 2011, more than 100,000 registered IDP families remained displaced - in camp and off-camp settlements. Military operations started in January 2012 in Khyber Agency, FATA, displacing more than 47,600 IDP families as of the end of April 2012. UNHCR [UN High Commissioner for Refugees] noted that after the disastrous floods of 2010, the 2011, floods again affected about 5.2 million people in Sindh and Baluchistan Provinces, causing large-scale displacement. UNHCR recommended that principles and standards of International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law be fully respected and a comprehensive IDP policy be adopted which is consistent with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. UNCT observed that reconstruction and rehabilitation are progressing very slowly. UNICEF [UN Children’s Fund] noted that in north-western Pakistan, more than 1 million people (including flood-affected) remain displaced following the 2009-2010 military action, with new operations in 2011 displacing more than 5,000 additional families.’ **[83c] (paragraph 75)**

29.04 Regarding IDPs in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA, UNICEF noted in its Pakistan Annual Report 2011, published 2012, that:

'In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 97,935 vulnerable children (42 per cent girls) participated in activities through community-based Child Protection Centres and Child-Friendly Spaces.

'A total of 322 Child Protection Committees were established with 6,700 members (including 2,770 women) who reached out to 10,000 women and 78,433 vulnerable children, including 23,160 girls.

'Psychosocial support was provided to 11,600 children (including 3,480 girls) and 6,870 women. About 6,700 children (including 2,680 girls) and 4,560 adolescents (including 3,192 girls) benefited from catch-up classes and vocational skills training.

'In the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, UNICEF supported the establishment of 85 community-based child protection committees. In total, 2,425 community representatives of the committees and 51 child protection monitors were trained on monitoring and referral systems.

'The child protection section also established 50 Child Protection Centres and Child-Friendly Spaces delivered psychosocial services for 13,821 affected children (including 4,875 girls) and 4,439 women and trained 100 child protection facilitators to deliver life-skills based education to 4,679 children (including 1,359 girls).' **[72c] (p44-45)**

See also Children: [Childcare and protection](#) and [Education](#)

29.05 The USSD Report 2009 noted that 'Media reports from 2003 estimated that 1.5 million Kashmiris displaced from Indian-held Kashmir had entered the country. The law entitles Kashmiris to the same rights as full citizens.' **[3b] (Section 2d)**

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30. Foreign refugees

30.01 The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, noted that Pakistan was:

'... a party to neither the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees nor its 1967 Protocol. No legislation provides for asylum or refugee status. The country lacks a legal and regulatory framework for the management of refugees and migration. Although there is no legislation excluding asylum seekers and refugees from the provisions of the law regarding illegal entry and stay or conferring legal status, the government in most cases provided protection against the expulsion or involuntary return of registered refugees to countries where their lives or freedom would be threatened. The country cooperated with the UNHCR in protecting, assisting, and voluntarily repatriating Afghan refugees.' **[3n] (Section 2d)**

30.02 The US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) World Refugee Survey 2009 recorded that:

'The Foreigners Act of 1946 (amended 2000) pertains to unregistered Afghans and non-Afghan asylum seekers and prescribes up to three years' imprisonment and a fine for

any who enter without valid travel documents. Pakistan is party, however, to the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political rights which, with few exceptions, allows expulsion only by law and requires the Government to allow those it wishes to expel to give reasons against doing so and to have competent authorities review their cases and to have representatives in doing so. Pakistan is also signatory, without reservation, to the 1984 Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment which prohibits refoulement of anyone where there is substantial risk that they will be tortured.' **[80]**

30.03 The USSD Report 2012 noted:

'Afghan refugees could avail themselves of the services of the police and courts, but some, particularly the poor, were afraid to do so. Any refugee registered with both the UNHCR and the government-run Commissionerate of Afghan Refugees was, in theory, able to obtain admission to public education facilities after filing the proper paperwork. In practice most registered Afghans attended private Afghan schools or schools sponsored by the international community. There were no reports that officials denied refugees access to a health facility on the basis on nationality.' **[3n] (Section 2d)**

30.04 The same source noted:

'Refugees faced societal discrimination and abuse from local communities, whose members resented economic competition and blamed refugees for high crime rates and terrorism. Single women, female-led households, and children working on the streets were particularly vulnerable to abuse and trafficking...

'Police in many cases demanded bribes from refugees. There were first-hand accounts of members of the intelligence services harassing refugees. There were also many reports of extortion of refugees who participated in the UNHCR's voluntary repatriation process and received repatriation grants (\$150 in cash assistance per family member, upon return to Afghanistan).

'Refugees were not allowed to work legally, but many worked as day laborers or in informal markets. Refugees often were exploited in the informal labor market. Refugee women and children were particularly vulnerable, accepting underpaid and undesirable positions in workplaces.' **[3n] (Section 2d)**

30.05 Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) noted in an article dated 4 November 2010 that 'Vulnerable and homeless returnees [to Afghanistan] cannot go back to Pakistan because it no longer accepts new refugees, and UNHCR also no longer offers protection to new refugees in Pakistan.' **[41d]**

See also Section [Trafficking](#)

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Afghan refugees

30.06 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan report, the State of Human Rights in 2012 (HRCP Report 2012), published March 2013, noted:

'When the year ended, there were 1,637,740 registered Afghans in Pakistan. There had been no new registration in 2012, with the exception of new birth registration, which was an ongoing process. Of the 76 Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan that were planned or managed by UNHCR, none was closed in 2012. These camps housed 544,484 registered Afghans in Pakistan, including 260,556 women. Well over half of the camps' population, 296,708 individuals to be precise, were younger than 18.' [27b] (p275-276)

30.07 The same source added:

'In mid-December, the government of Pakistan extended by six months the December 31 deadline by which all registered Afghans were to return to their homeland. However, the trends of repatriation in recent years did not suggest that the June 30, 2013 deadline would be met either... Overall, as many as 83,423 registered Afghans in Pakistan (15,348 families) chose to return to their homeland in 2012 with UNHCR facilitation.' [27b] (p275)

30.08 On 2 July 2013, the United Nations welcomed the extension of refugee cards for Afghans by the Pakistan government, which were due to expire on 30 June. The report added that around 22,000 Afghan refugees had returned home from Pakistan so far this year. [40b]

30.09 The USSD Report 2012 cited that:

'Since 1979 the government has provided temporary protection to millions of refugees from Afghanistan. According to the UNHCR, at year's end an estimated 1.66 million registered Afghan refugees remained in the country, while another 83,423 voluntarily repatriated to Afghanistan. Two additional Voluntary Repatriation Centers became operational in March in Bannu and Timergara in KP, but the government closed the Bannu center in August due to security concerns. There were no credible estimates of how many Afghans were undocumented or unregistered, but estimates put the number at more than one million. The law states that anyone born in the country is a citizen. However, the courts' interpretation of this law was that the principle of birth in the country could not be read in isolation and independently of the other sections of the act concerning citizenship by descent in the case of the children of Afghan refugees. The courts decided that due to the "temporary" nature of Afghans' presence in the country, the law would not apply to the Afghan population, and Afghan children therefore were not granted Pakistani citizenship. Under the Secure Card for Afghan Citizens project, the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) issued birth certificates to 776, 683 Afghan children below the age of 18, identifying them as Afghan citizens.' [3n] (Section 2d)

See also Children: [Childcare and protection](#)

30.10 The USSD Report 2012 added:

'The current Proof of Registration cards (PoR – the official documents held by registered refugees that allow them to remain legally in the country) were due to expire in December, but the prime minister extended their validity until June 30, 2013. At the time of the extension, the prime minister also announced the formation of a cabinet committee, headed by the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions, which is charged with designing a new policy for the stay of Afghan refugees. The UNHCR expected that the government would continue to respect the principle that repatriation must be

voluntary. On the other hand, the International Organization for Migration reported that harassment by local authorities, including police forces, increased during the year.

‘The government generally abstained from forcibly returning Afghans with PoR cards, and during the year the UNHCR received reports of only five deportations of PoR card holders, four of whom later returned to Pakistan. According to the UNHCR, the government deported a total of 7,648 undocumented Afghan nationals (nonrefugees) during the year, a decrease of 20 percent compared with the same period the previous year.’ **[3n] (Section 2d)**

30.11 The USCRI World Refugee Survey 2009 reported that:

‘In August [2009], the Government extended the 2009 deadline allowing Afghans to remain in the country under the Tri-Partite Agreement between it and UNHCR and the Government of Afghanistan in light of insecurity there and low absorption capacity. UNHCR said it could take three to five years to finish repatriations... Afghans who registered with the National Database and Registration Authority between October 2006 and February 2007, including children over five, hold Proof of Registration (PoR) cards providing de facto temporary protection through [to] 2012 but no other legal rights. Those who arrived after 2007 are not eligible for PoRs and those who leave the territory lose them [sic].’ **[80]**

30.12 The same source added that ‘Afghan nationals were regularly arrested under the Foreigners Act for illegally staying in Pakistan and for not having valid travel documents. Media reports suggested that over 1,500 had either been arrested or handed over to the Afghan authorities after serving their sentence for their unauthorised presence in Pakistan.’ **[27a] (p199, Refugees: Jalozai)**

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31. Citizenship and nationality

31.01 Information issued by the Pakistan government Directorate General of Immigration and Passports website, accessed 7 February 2012, advised that Pakistan citizenship can be acquired in specified circumstances; these included: ‘Foreign ladies married to Pakistani nationals’, and the ‘Minor children (below 21 years of age) of Pak [sic] ladies married to foreigners.’ Children born to a Pakistani mother and foreign national father after 18 April 2000 are to be treated automatically as citizens of Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan has dual nationality agreements with 16 countries, including the UK. **[29b] (Immigration)** Travel advice issued by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, updated 25 March 2013, accessed 1 May 2013, stated that ‘If you or your father were born in Pakistan, you might be considered a Pakistani national by the authorities, even if you do not hold a Pakistani passport...’ **[11a] (Local laws and customs)** Pakistani citizens acquiring nationality of a country with which there are no dual nationality arrangements are required to renounce Pakistani nationality. (Directorate General of Immigration and Passports, Pakistan, accessed 7 February 2012) **[29b] (Immigration)**

31.02 The [Pakistan Citizenship Act, 1951](#), stated that Pakistan citizenship could be acquired:

- By birth - Section 4 of the Citizenship Act
- By descent - Section 5 of the Citizenship Act

- By migration - Section 6 of the Citizenship Act
- By Naturalization - Section 9 of the Citizenship Act
- By Marriage -Section 10 of the Citizenship Act **[45]**

National identity cards

31.03 The National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), website accessed 20 May 2013, noted that every 'genuine' citizen of Pakistan aged 18 or above is eligible for a Computerised National Identity Card (CNIC). To obtain a CNIC the applicant needs to register at any NADRA Swift Registration Center (NSRC). The following documents are required for the CNIC: birth certificate, educational certificates, and the national identity cards of the applicant's immediate/blood relatives. A citizenship certificate issued by the Ministry of Interior is also required. **[29g]**

31.04 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted in its report, State of Human Rights in 2009 (HRCP Report 2009), published February 2010, that:

'In November [2009], a three-member bench of the Supreme Court directed the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) to formulate a policy for the registration of Hindu couples, according to their religious customs, in order to enable them to get computerised national identity cards. The court heard a suo motu case on the application of a Hindu couple from RahimYar Khan regarding the problems the Hindu community in Pakistan faced in acquiring identity cards. The SC [Supreme Court] also asked the government to introduce legislation in this regard.' **[27c] (p42)**

31.05 A Child Registration Certificate (CRC) should be issued to every Pakistani child aged 18 years or under and includes '...the minor's name and registration number, date of birth, place of birth, gender, and parents' names and CNIC numbers. The Child is allotted [the] same registration number when he/she applies for CNIC upon attaining 18 years of age. It is the responsibility of every child's parents/guardians to get registered the children under 18 years of age [sic].' (Report to UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, 4 January 2008) **[79b] (paragraph 174)**

See also Children: [Documentation](#) and Freedom of religion: [Voting rights](#), [Passports and ID cards](#) and [Hindus and Sikhs](#)

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32. Forged and fraudulently obtained official documents

32.01 The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) noted in a Response to Information Request (RIR), Pakistan: Fraudulent documents (2008-2010), published 24 November 2010, that:

'In an article published on 10 August 2010, the Daily Times of Lahore reported that "fake passports are widely available" in Pakistan. According to the Sydney Morning Herald, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) in Pakistan arrests an average of six people a day in the Islamabad area for document fraud... An assistant director of the FIA stated that tens of thousands of people have some sort of involvement in this industry... According to a an article published on 12 November 2009 in another Lahore

newspaper, The Nation, the current British Home Office Minister responsible for Immigration stated that numerous applications for British visas presented by Pakistanis are accompanied by false documents. The Consul General of the United States in Pakistan stated that in July 2010, nearly 98% of applications for American visas made by Pakistanis were refused because they were accompanied by false documents...’
[12p]

32.02 The IRB also produced a

‘... partial list of cases reported in the media concerning fraudulent documents in Pakistan:

‘The Supreme Court asked the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to review the degrees of legislators... Almost all of the nearly 1,100 elected officials have to submit their diplomas for verification... According to an article in the newspaper The News International on 14 October 2010, at the time the article was published, the degrees of 67 Members of Parliament had been declared fake; however, the hearings into the fake degrees was still ongoing as of 1 November 2010...

‘In September 2010, six Pakistanis went to Denmark to seek asylum... They were allegedly in possession of fake visas and were aided by FIA [Federal Investigation Agency] agents at Benazir Bhutto International Airport...

‘In September 2010, the FIA arrested four people-three women who had fake Afghan passports that had been provided to them by the smuggler accompanying them-as their airplane was about to take off for Oslo... An FIA agent and an immigration inspector allegedly helped the passengers clear the checks prior to boarding...

‘On 20 June 2010, Zimbabwean police arrested two Pakistanis with fake Kenyan passports...

‘In March 2010, the FIA arrested a forgery expert and found at his residence various forged documents, including passports, visa stickers and security papers...

‘In early 2009, Pakistan’s National Accountability Bureau (NAB) announced that the former consul general of Pakistan in the United States would soon be arrested for issuing 300 fake passports to Pakistanis... He subsequently admitted in court that his office had indeed issued 300 fake passports...’ **[12p]**

32.03 The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) noted in a Response to Information Request (RIR), dated 28 November 2007, that:

‘A July 2005 article in Dawn, a Karachi-based newspaper, states that “tens of thousands of Pakistanis manage every year to reach [the] UK on forged documents and through other means of human trafficking”. In an article on human trafficking [March 2005], The Daily Times... indicates that “illegal immigrants travelling with fake student visas” are also commonplace. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), a non-governmental organization which promotes the advancement of human rights in Pakistan indicates in their 2006 report that during the previous four years, over 33,000 Pakistanis were returned to Pakistan after using fraudulent travel documents to enter Oman. The HRCP report also estimates that over 300,000 people were thought to leave Pakistan by illegal means each year.’ **[12b]**

32.04 The same source noted that:

‘The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), a Pakistani law enforcement agency which generally investigates cases of corruption and immigration control, including offences under passport-related legislation states that it was aware of 131 passengers travelling on forged documents in 2004 and 83 in the first six months of 2005.

‘According to the Pakistan Press International (PPI), in May 2006, the British government donated a machine that detects forgeries to the Pakistan passport and immigration office. This equipment, which magnifies images on any document to a very high degree and can identify the use of different inks in the preparation of documents, is intended to help Pakistani authorities identify forged or fraudulent documents, such as national identity cards, bank statements and other documents required to obtain visas. The FIA already owns four such machines. The Director of Visa Services at the British High Commission in Islamabad is quoted in the article as saying that approximately two percent of applications for United Kingdom (UK) visas are fraudulent.’ **[12b]**

32.05 Another IRB RIR, dated 18 June 2004, stated that:

‘During a presentation at the Ninth European Country of Origin Information Seminar held in Dublin, Ireland, on 26 and 27 May 2004, an Islamabad-based representative of the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR) provided information on various country conditions in Pakistan. The UNHCR representative stated that there is a high level of corruption in Pakistan and that it is possible to obtain many types of fraudulent documents or documents that are fraudulently authenticated by a bona fide stamp or authority.’ **[12a]**

32.06 The same report noted that:

‘The Information Centre on Asylum and Migration of the German Federal Office for the Recognition of Foreign Refugees indicated that “[i]n nearly all cases, the documents presented [by asylum seekers] for proof of persecution (reports under the penal code, warrants for arrest, court judgments, lawyers’ correspondence) were falsified or of incorrect content. In Pakistan, it is not...difficult to have a (simulated) criminal proceeding initiated against oneself, in order to get authentic documents (e.g. a “First Information Report” or a decision to set the accused free until the date of the trial)... It is possible...either [to] pay for or to use private contacts to have a newspaper article published depicting a situation of persecution”.’ **[12a]**

See also Section [Corruption](#)

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33. Exit and return

33.01 The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, observed that the laws provide for the freedom of movement within the country, foreign travel, emigration and repatriation but the government limited these in practice. However:

‘The government’s restrictions on access to certain areas of FATA [Federally Administered Tribal Areas], KP [Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa], and Balochistan, often for

security concerns, hindered the ability of humanitarian assistance providers to deliver aid to vulnerable populations. The law prohibits travel to Israel, and the country's passports include a statement that they are "valid for all countries except Israel." Government employees and students must obtain "no objection certificates" from the government before traveling abroad. This requirement rarely was enforced for students.'

[3n] (Section 2d)

33.02 The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) noted in a Reponse to Information Request (RIR) dated 19 November 2007 that:

'A Karachi-based lawyer provided the following information regarding border security measures in 31 October 2007 correspondence to the Research Directorate. There are strict measures adopted by border authorities regarding Pakistanis exiting Pakistan via international flights. After proceeding through Customs, Pakistanis who are leaving Pakistan will appear before an immigration officer who will ask various questions. The immigration officer will verify in the computer system that there are no restrictions against the person in question and will then stamp the traveller's passport with an exit stamp if everything seems in order. The traveller will then proceed to either an army officer or another officer under the supervision of an army officer who will ask questions, check the passport and, if everything is in order, the traveller will proceed to the departure lounge. With regard to border authorities at land borders, the lawyer states that "equally strict measures" are adopted, although they may vary from one border to another.'

[12i]

33.03 With regards to a parent taking their child out of Pakistan, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) noted 'If a parent has custody of a child in Pakistan, he or she automatically has the right to remove the child from the country as long as no restrictions have been imposed on their travel by a guardian judge. No special application needs to be made to remove the child, whether for a holiday or other purpose. If any restrictions have been imposed the parent needs permission from the court to leave the country with the child.'

[11j] (Custody issues)

33.04 The FCO noted in its Travel Advice for Pakistan, updated 25 March 2013, accessed 1 May 2013, on travelling with children, that 'A single parent or other adult who is not the child's parent may need to provide documentary evidence of parental responsibility, particularly if the child is of Pakistani origin, before the immigration authorities will allow the child to leave the country.'

[11a] (Entry Requirements - Travelling with children)

33.05 The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) Research Directorate noted in a response, dated 16 October 2003, "regarding procedures taken by airport authorities when a woman leaves the country with her children but without her husband", that:

'The Director of AGHS Legal Aid Cell (ALAC), an all-women's law firm based in Lahore..., provided the Research Directorate with information she obtained during interviews with the Assistant Director of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) – the authority responsible for controlling exit and entry into Pakistan at the airports. The Director, who is a lawyer and founding member of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan..., said that, according to the FIA, there are no obstacles facing a woman leaving Pakistan with her children but not her husband, as long as she possesses valid passports and visas... If the travel documents are valid, a woman does not require the consent or permission of her husband, either in person, in writing or by telephone, to leave the country on her own while with her children... This is the case whether the children are endorsed on her passport or have their own passports... The Director also

noted that immigration officials do not intervene even when children are travelling alone without either parent...

'In the case where a divorce is pending or custody or guardianship of the children has been filed, the Director relayed the following information:

"The immigration authorities don't have any data or record of the guardian courts or [of] any higher courts in Pakistan. The authorities only intervene when any specific order from the court is made to authorities to stop the children from going abroad. Such orders are entered in a register called [the] "Involvement Register" which is kept at the concerned airports. In the absence of any order from the competent courts, the authorities don't intervene..."

'Regarding whether airport authorities would be aware of a case in which a First Information Report (FIR) has been lodged against the mother for kidnapping her own children, the Director explained that:

"[t]he authorities' only source through which to access such information is the Interior Ministry. No police official is authorized to inform the immigration authorities. In [the case where an] FIR is lodged against the mother, the police officials inform the Interior Ministry which directs the authorities to include the name of the mother in [the] Involvement Register, Check List, Black List or Exit Control List (ECL) etc., or otherwise. ...

"The Interior Ministry has control over the Exit Control List, so the name of such woman or children can be included. The immigration authorities only enter the name in the ECL by orders of [the] Interior Ministry. They don't have their own control over the matter..."

'Corroborating the information above, a consular official at the High Commission for Pakistan, in Ottawa, said that he was unaware of any restrictions a woman would face or special consent she would need to produce to airport authorities when leaving the country with only her children, as long as she possessed proper travel documents...

'As well, the Sales Manager at the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) office in Toronto said in a telephone interview that a woman exiting Pakistan does not need to produce a letter of consent from her husband to allow her to leave the country without her husband though with her children... According to the Sales Manager, neither PIA, nor any of the airport check points – two levels of customs, passport control and security at the departure gate – would require her to produce a letter of consent from her husband for her to leave the country with her children...

'However, according to the US Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs advisory on international parental child abduction claims,

"[u]nder Pakistani family law, which is based on Islamic law, the father controls virtually all aspects of his family's life. He decides where his wife and children will live, how the children are to be educated and whether or where they may travel. Courts rarely, if ever, give custody of children to a woman who is not a Muslim, who will not raise the children as Muslims, does not plan to raise them in Pakistan, or has remarried. In all probability, even if the mother wins custody, the children would still need the father's permission to leave the country. ...

“If a foreign born mother were granted full custody of her child, the father has the right to refuse to allow the mother and child to depart if the court order does not specifically allow her to remove the children from Pakistan...”

‘Commenting on the advisory above, the Director of ALAC stated the following:

“The information given by the immigration authorities is correct in general. However, courts have in some cases dealt with issues of custody in a manner which has prejudiced the mother's right to custody and undermined her rights as a parent as compared to the father. The State Department's report is obviously based on judgments of Pakistani courts interpreting and applying [judgments barring] mothers from leaving the country with the children. If the immigration authorities receive an order from the court they have to comply, and, in some such cases women have had difficulty leaving the country with their children. Many of these women were foreign nationals, but even Pakistani mothers, in some cases, have confronted such problems. I would say that a problem of discrimination and unequal treatment does exist, but lies with the interpretation of the law of guardianship and custody by a section of the judiciary and not with laws or policies regarding exist or entry into Pakistan...”’

[12s]

- 33.06 The Asia Society ‘Report by the Independent Commission on Pakistan Police Reform’, entitled ‘Stabilizing Pakistan through Police Reform’, (Asia Society Report), dated July 2012, stated ‘The Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (PISCES), which has been in place since 2002. As of May 2012, this system was being replaced by an improved homegrown mechanism called the Integrated Border Management System. PISCES maintains a database of all international travelers entering or leaving Pakistan.’ **[138a] (p100)**
- 33.07 The Government of Pakistan’s Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) provided information on their website, undated, accessed 20 May 2013, on the Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (PISCES). The FIA noted that:
- ‘PISCES Project provides Immigration officials and law enforcement agencies with a tracking system to capture vital information of travelers and allows them to identify and, if necessary detain individuals of interest...
- ‘PISCES project will enable the linking of all ports of exit/entry under real-time networking environments and provide smooth working co-ordination and standardization among different law enforcement agencies in the area of immigration control. In this connection PISCES system has been installed at seven major airports of the country i.e. Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta, Multan and Faisalabad airports till the end of year 2004. The system has provision to accommodate information on suspects from all law enforcement agencies like Immigration, Police, Narcotics Control, Anti-smuggling, and Intelligence Services.’ **[29d]**
- 33.08 The Pakistan Times reported on 20 February 2008 that:
- ‘This system [PISCES] works against pre-defined watch list of suspects that includes ECL [Exit Control List], stolen passport and blacklisted for visa, lost/ missing passports and blacklisted for passport categories... There are 17 operational sites of PISCES in Pakistan, including Karachi airport, Lahore airport, Islamabad airport, Peshawar airport, Quetta airport, Multan airport, Faisalabad airport, Wagha land route, Chaman land

route, Torkham land route, Wagha Railway Station, Karachi seaport, Khokarapar railway station, Ghassbandar seaport, Port Bin Qasim, Taftan land route and Sust land route. The system is also being planned for Gwadar airport, Pasni airport, Turbat airport and Gwadar seaport... PISCES has contributed a lot in identifying the high value suspects especially involved in terrorism and human trafficking...' [44a]

- 33.09 The Asia Society Report stated that the FIA oversaw immigration functions at 'each of the 26 notified entry/exit points of the country, including 14 airports, eight land routes, and four seaports. Throughout these points, which have an annual traffic of more than eight million passengers, the FIA is responsible for preventing smuggling and human trafficking.' [138a] (p100)
- 33.10 The USSD Country Reports on Terrorism 2011, published 31 July 2012, stated 'In November, biometric screenings at land border crossings began on the Afghan and Pakistani sides of the border.' [30] (Chapter 2. Country reports: South and Central Asia Overview)

See also Section [Freedom of Movement](#)

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Passports

- 33.11 Ordinary Machine Readable passports (MRP) can be issued to all citizens of Pakistan. In applying, applicants aged 18 or above should provide their original National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) ID card plus two photocopies; NOC [No Objection Certificate] in case of a Government Servant; old passport (if issued) plus a photocopy; and foreign passport, plus copies, for dual nationality holders only. (Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Interior, Directorate General Immigration and Passports, undated, accessed 20 May 2013) [29a] (Ordinary Passport)
- 33.12 The World Bank stated in its section 'Women, business and the law', Pakistan 2011, accessed 28 June 2013, regarding passports and citizenship, that unmarried women were able to apply for a passport in the same way as a man. The same source noted, on travel and movement, that no restrictions could be located regarding unmarried women travelling outside the country. [144a]
- 33.13 Regarding border control using a Multi-Biometric E Passport, Pakistan's National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), accessed 20 May 2013, reported on its: '... Automated Border Control (ABC) system which serves as a tool for law-enforcement agencies in eradicating illegal immigration and human trafficking. The Automated Border Control System is fully automated immigration control system linked with the central Passport server. It authenticates e-Passport, identity and other travel documents by performing on spot Facial Recognition and Fingerprint Identification with utmost reliability and efficiency. It also keeps the record of automated data verification, passenger travel history, flight information, destination, port-of-origin, nationality, verification log and officer's comments.' [29f] (Automated Border Control)
- 33.14 The IRB of Canada noted in its RIR dated 19 November 2007 that 'According to the November 2007 edition of the Travel Information Manual (TIM), exit permits are not

required of Pakistani citizens by immigration authorities when exiting Pakistan, but passports are...' [12I]

- 33.15 An [email](#) response from an official at the British High Commission in Islamabad, dated 30 January 2009, stated that, in theory, Pakistani passport holders would have their passports stamped at all ports and legal border crossings when entering and exiting the country. However, since corruption is a problem, it would be possible for an individual to avoid having their passport stamped by, for example, paying a bribe to the relevant official. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) official further stated that, as far as they were aware, and aside from the reasons stated above, there would be no exceptions when a passport would not be stamped. [11c]
- 33.16 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan report, the State of Human Rights in 2009, (HRCP Report 2009), published February 2010, noted that 'According to the Federal Minister for Religious Affairs, International Machine Readable (IMR) passports were made mandatory for obtaining Hajj visas in 2009. Applications without Computerized National Identity Cards (CNIC) and IMR passports were not entertained causing great inconvenience to the pilgrims.' [27c] (p120)

See also Freedom of Religion: [Passport and ID cards](#), [Arrest and detention – legal rights](#), and [Corruption](#)

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Exit Control List (ECL)

- 33.17 The website of Pakistan's Ministry of Interior, accessed 20 May 2013, stated the following regarding the Exit Control List (ECL):
- '1. Exit from Pakistan (Control) Ordinance, 1981, empowers the Federal Government to prohibit any person from proceeding abroad. Ordinarily following categories of persons are placed on ECL:-
 - Persons involved in mass corruption and misuse of power / authority causing loss to the government funds/property.
 - Government employees involved in economic crime where large government funds have been embezzled or institutional frauds committed.
 - Hardened criminals involved in acts of terrorism / conspiracy, heinous crimes and threatening national security.
 - Key directors of firms having tax default / liabilities of Rs. (rupees) 10 million or more.
 - Only 2 -3 key directors of firms having more than Rs. 100 million loan default / liabilities.
 - Names of persons if recommended by the Registrar, High Courts / Supreme Court of Pakistan and Banking Courts only.
 - Drug traffickers...
 - '2. The On-Line System is operational at the Ministry linked with international airports at Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, Islamabad and Faisalabad.

- ‘3. Any person aggrieved by the order of Federal Government regarding placement of his name on ECL, can under the law, file a Review Petition giving justifications for review and also can seek a personal hearing with the competent authority.
- ‘4. ECL is reviewed periodically to assess the need for further retention of a person on ECL or otherwise.’ **[29o] (Publications: Exit Control List)**

33.18 The HRCP Report 2012 noted that:

‘The Exit Control List (ECL) remained a very potent weapon at the disposal of the State to prevent the citizens from leaving the territorial boundary of the country. The constitutionality of the Exit Control List has been the subject of debate in the past. The primary caveat to the ECL remains not disclosing the reasons for the restriction to the person whose name has been included in the list. However, this year saw many names included on the directions of the superior courts. The ECL is a system of border control exercised by Government of Pakistan under the Exit from Pakistan (Control) Ordinance 1981. Under the control of the Ministry of Interior, Pakistan’s Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) is responsible for smooth and accurate control of the ECL. The Lahore High Court had observed in 1999 that the blanket powers granted under the ECL violate Articles 2-A, 4, 19 and 25 of the Constitution and the principles of natural justice. In particular, the court objected to the failure to give detailed reasons for adding someone’s name to the ECL.

‘As in previous years, the arbitrary use of ECL to prevent individuals from leaving the country continued this year. In 2012, the name of Farooq Bhoja, the owner of Bhoja Airlines, was placed on ECL, after an aircraft operated by the airlines crashed near Islamabad. On the direction of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) added the names of 19 top officials on the ECL, including former federal ministers Raja Pervez Ashraf (Water and Power), Liaquat Jatoi (Water and Power) and Shaukat Tareen (Finance), former federal secretaries Shahid Rafi (Water and Power), Ismail Qureshi (Water and Power), Ishfaq Mahmood (Water and Power) and Salman Siddique (Finance), former NEPRA chairmen Khalid Saeed and Saeed Zafar, GENCO CEO Yousaf Ali, Private Power Infrastructure Board (PPIB) MD Khalid Irfan Rehman, PEPCO CEOs Saleem Arif and Fazal Ahmad Khan. Other individuals whose names were placed on the ECL included Lyari-based banned Peoples Aman Committee (PAC) leaders Uzair Baloch and Zafar Baloch.’ **[27b] (p93-94)**

33.19 In a Response to Information Request (RIR), dated 19 November 2007, the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) noted that, following discussions with a Karachi-based lawyer:

‘The Exit Control List (ECL) is a list of Pakistani citizens wanted in cases of crime or corruption or who are facing court charges and who are prohibited from leaving the country. However, various sources indicate that the ECL is sometimes used to “harass” human rights activists or political dissidents. In addition, the Karachi-based lawyer stated the following:

‘The Government places the name of anyone who it does not wish to leave Pakistan [on the ECL]. There could be many reasons, both justifiable and unjustifiable, for placing the name of someone on this list. Most of the names [on the list] are of those whom the Government of the day do not like but ... some ... may be [subject to] serious investigation or criminal proceedings in progress or likely to be commenced. [The]

majority of the names, however, are of the politicians in opposition to the Government of the day.’ [12i]

- 33.20 In an RIR dated 23 November 2005, the IRB noted that ‘Although the Ministry of the Interior maintains the ECL the National Accountability Bureau may recommend names to be added to the list; judicial action is not required to add a name to the ECL, though permission from the courts is required to remove a name from the ECL. There is no limit to the amount of time a person’s name remains on the list.’ [12g]
- 33.21 Continuing the subject of exit control in Pakistan, the IRB further noted in its RIR dated 19 November 2007 that ‘A First Information Report (FIR) is the police report prepared when an offence is committed. The Karachi-based lawyer explained that Pakistani citizens who have an FIR registered against them can still leave Pakistan, and he added that the “lodging of [a] FIR by itself does not automatically stop a person from leaving Pakistan. Many FIRs are baseless, bogus and lodged to harass ... opponents but ultimately found frivolous and dismissed”.’ [12i]

See also Section [Arrest and detention – Legal rights](#)

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Treatment of failed asylum seekers

- 33.22 On 2 December 2008, the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) noted, in a Response to Information Request (RIR), that:
- ‘United Press International (UPI) reported that in August 2002, Nasir Ali Mubarak, a Pakistani man detained on immigration charges in the United States, who was married to an American woman and who was deported to Pakistan, was “detained for many days at an unknown location”. In April 2004, UPI reported that... “detainees have been arrested upon arrival by Pakistani immigration officials”. However, according to 24 May 2005 correspondence from the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), “[f]ailed Pakistani refugee claimants are not usually detained”.’ [12h]
- 33.23 In another RIR, dated 26 June 2003, following correspondence with a London-based barrister and advocate of the Supreme Court and High Courts of Pakistan, the IRB reported that:
- ‘According to the barrister, FIA [Federal Investigative Agency] “does not interview all nationals returning to Pakistan. It detains and interviews those persons who are alleged to have violated any law in respect of travel/visit to a foreign country, e.g. traveled on fake travel documents or entered a country without [a] valid visa, etc.” The UNHCR office in Islamabad provided the following similar information in correspondence to the Research Directorate: “FIA only interviews those nationals who are wanted by the government or involved in any criminal, unlawful or anti-state activities...”
- ‘The HRCP indicated that the FIA “are given a list of deported persons and may interview those they believe [to] have any involvement in criminal activity in the country”. The HRCP went on to state that “Pakistanis entering another country illegally may be detained on their return, but are generally released within a few days”.’ [12i]
- 33.24 The same source noted that:

'In correspondence with the Research Directorate, a Pakistan-based political and defense consultant with a doctorate degree in international relations and political science who has written two books on Pakistan and, until 2001, was a Professor of Political Science at Punjab University in Lahore, Pakistan, provided the following information about the FIA:

'Pakistanis returning from abroad are not interviewed by the FIA. You pass through passport control and customs and then leave. However, if a person is deported by a foreign country for any reason (overstay, passport and visa fraud, involvement in a crime in the host country) and formally handed over to Pakistani authorities, the FIA/relevant authorities would undertake an inquiry. If found to have forged [a] passport/visa or [committed] any other illegal activity, he/she can be charged and presented to a court of law. All deportations are inquired into.

'If a person returns to Pakistan quietly after having failed to get a refugee status elsewhere, he/she faces no problem in returning to Pakistan. However, if a failed applicant for refugee status is handed over by the country concerned to Pakistani authorities, Pakistani FIA/relevant authorities would question such a person... when a Pakistani national is deported by a foreign government and handed over to Pakistani authorities, the first thing the Pakistani authorities check is if he/she travelled on [a] forged passport and fake visa. If that is the case, they do two things. First, they would like to know where and how did that person get the forged passport or visa. They would like to know about the travel agent or any other person who facilitated his/her departure. Second, the authorities can file a criminal case in a lower court for having forged travel documents. Sometimes newspaper[s] publish news that a person has been sentenced to imprisonment for a couple of months for travel document fraud.

'If a person is deported by a foreign government but not formally handed over to Pakistani authorities, they would hardly know about the case and the person can quietly return to Pakistan.' [12i]

33.25 The IRB further stated that 'There is no standard interview procedure employed by the FIA when interviewing returning nationals, including those who are failed refugee claimants... According to the barrister, "No punitive measure is taken against failed refugee claimant[s] unless FIA official[s] [are] able to find some lapse or default on the part of [the] returning national['s] ... documentation...".' [12i]

33.26 The same source also reported that:

'Information provided by the UNHCR office in Islamabad on the possibility of punitive measures against returning Pakistani nationals is as follows ...Generally, there is no punitive action for failed refugee claimants... If a person returns to Pakistan quietly after being denied refugee status, nothing is expected to happen. If such a person is deported and handed over to Pakistani authorities, the person will face preliminary inquiry to determine if he has violated Pakistani laws. If a person's refugee status case gets a lot of media publicity, the government will inquire into it. However, there is no law that can be invoked against a person for applying for refugee status elsewhere.

'A Pakistani denied refugee status can get into trouble on return if there are criminal cases registered against him/her in Pakistan. The FIA/Police can arrest such a person on arrival at the port of entry (if they get prior information of his return) or later on as they come to know of his/her return.' [12i]

34. Employment rights

34.01 On 13 August 2012, the UN General Assembly published a summarised 'Compilation [of reports] prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/2 – Pakistan' for the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October/November 2012. The report stated:

'UNCT [United Nations Country Team] noted that insecurity in employment exists; accident rates at workplaces are alarming and deplorable and that adequate and stringent measures are required to protect the working people.

'UNCT noted that there are sufficient labour laws in place in the industrial and commercial sector, but no legal protection exists for workers in the large informal sector such as for agricultural workers and home-based workers. Furthermore, labour inspection is not extended to the informal sector, as a result of which workers suffer with regard to exercising their rights, protection of their wages and jobs and cannot access labour-related judicial remedy at times of disputes.' **[83c] (paragraphs 49-50)**

34.02 The US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 (USSD Report 2012), published 19 April 2013, stated:

'The minimum wage for unskilled workers was 8,000 rupees (\$82) per month, except in Punjab, where it was 9,000 rupees (\$93) per month. Provincial governments' minimum wage boards set skilled and semiskilled sector minimum wages, which vary by province. The government's 2011-12 Economic Survey considered the poverty line to be 3,389 rupees (\$34.87) per month. Significant sectors of the workforce, including those in the informal sector, domestic servants, and agricultural workers, were not covered by minimum wage laws.

'The law provides for a maximum workweek of 48 hours (54 hours for seasonal factories) with rest periods during the workday and paid annual holidays. Additional benefits required under the labor code include official government holidays, overtime pay, annual and sick leave, health care, education for workers' children, social security, old age benefits, and a workers' welfare fund.

'These regulations do not apply to agricultural workers, workers in factories with fewer than 10 employees, domestic workers, or contractors. In addition, such workers do not have the right to access "worker courts" to seek redress of grievances and were otherwise extremely vulnerable to exploitation. The inapplicability of many labor laws and the lack of enforcement by the government gave employers in many sectors relative impunity with regard to working conditions, treatment, work hours, and pay.

'Provincial governments have primary responsibility for enforcing national labor regulations. Enforcement was ineffective due to limited resources, corruption, and inadequate regulatory structures. In Sindh provincial policies against surprise inspections severely limited effective enforcement. In Punjab routine factory labor inspections were replaced by a self-declaration system whereby factory owners post declarations about workplace safety, health, and wage issues in their factories.

Factories are then chosen at random for inspection, but declarations are not mandatory and there are no penalties for not complying with the self-declaration policy. Balochistan and KP continued to allow surprise inspections. Many workers remained unaware of their rights, especially in the informal sectors. Given the serious restrictions on labor inspections and the impact of limited resources and corruption, inspections and concomitant penalties were insufficient to deter violations of labor laws.

'Health and safety standards were poor in all sectors. There was a serious lack of adherence to mine safety and health protocols. For example, many mines had only one opening for entry, egress, and ventilation. Workers could not remove themselves from dangerous working conditions without risking loss of employment. Informal sector employees faced multiple precarious situations, particularly in less visible, informal sectors such as domestic work. There were no official statistics on workplace fatalities and accidents during the year, but on September 11, at least 24 people, including children, were killed when a fire broke out at a shoe factory in Lahore, the same day a fire killed approximately 300 in a factory in Karachi.' **[3n] (Section 7d)**

- 34.03 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan report, the 'State of Human Rights in 2012' (HRCP Report 2012), published March 2013, stated:

'Most of the issues facing the workers in 2011 continued into 2012 with little positive movement. In a dwindling economy, poor law and order, a debilitating energy crisis, and failing public and private enterprises left thousands upon thousands unemployed. The workers of recently privatised public industries and corporations protested against unfair treatment. Workers of state-owned companies slated for privatisation vociferously opposed any move towards that.' **[27b] (p198)**

See also Children: [Child labour](#)

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35. Land disputes

- 35.01 The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Land tenure and property rights portal noted in its Country profile – Pakistan, dated 21 September 2010, that:

'Squatting and land-grabbing are common in Pakistan. The lack of land available for housing development and lease by individuals in growing urban areas has forced migrants into informal settlements and squatting on vacant land. Pakistan is also home to individuals and groups known as the Land Mafia who illegally take possession of land or claim ownership of land and dispossess true owners through legal or extra-legal means. The Illegal Dispossession Act of 2004 was passed in an effort to address the problem but has had little effect to date.' **[75a] (Securing land rights)**

- 35.02 The same source noted:

'Land disputes are prevalent in rural and urban areas throughout Pakistan. A revenue court system has jurisdiction over disputes regarding land documents, tenancy, land revenue, and land transactions. Disputes are heard at the tehsil level (a level of local

government similar to a county) by the tehsildar, the officer responsible for the collection of land revenue and land administration. A Chief Settlement Officer [sic] and the provincial-level Board of Revenue are the appellate authorities within the revenue court system. The revenue court system, which is designed to provide a specialized, local, rapid resolution of disputes, has been criticized by landholders as time-consuming, complex, and subject to corruption. Land administration offices do not publish procedures for bringing a claim, documentation of land rights is often missing, land records maintained by the local authorities are often incomplete or of questionable validity, and land administration officials such as the patwari often do not appear to provide evidence. Cases may take years to resolve.

'Pakistan's formal court system also has jurisdiction to hear land cases, creating a parallel structure of courts. Land disputes are the most common form of dispute filed with the formal court system, perhaps in part because filing a case may stay a pending revenue court proceeding. Pakistan's judiciary is hampered by low pay, poor training, and a large volume of cases. Between 50% and 75% of cases brought before lower-level civil courts and the high courts are land-related disputes. By one estimate, over a million land cases are pending countrywide. Major causes of land disputes are inaccurate or fraudulent land records, erroneous boundary descriptions that create overlapping claims, and multiple registrations to the same land by different parties. Credible evidence of land rights is often nearly impossible to obtain. Land cases can take between 4 and 10 years to resolve, with the party in possession of the land delaying adjudication in order to prolong the period of beneficial use. Appeals are assumed.' **[75a] (Land disputes and conflicts)**

35.03 USAID added:

'Inhabitants of Pakistan's Tribal Area do not have access to the High Court and Supreme Court except for constitutional claims and challenges. Land disputes are handled by the traditional jirga: a round-table conference in which there are no leaders, and participants are selected at the time of convening based on age, reliability, and shrewdness. Decisions must be unanimous and the jirga can impose fines for wrongful behavior. In Punjab and Sindh Provinces, local leaders and elected panchayat (local governance body) members often hear and resolve land disputes. In most areas, women are not permitted to participate in the jirga, and resolutions reached often perpetuate existing biases against women's land ownership and control.' **[75a] (Land disputes and conflicts)**

35.04 On 10 February 2012, reporting on the rise of land disputes in Pakistan, Dawn quoted an Islamabad property dealer as saying "Many people have been eliminated over land disputes and incidents of murder and kidnapping for land have become common, putting a question mark on the efficiency of the law enforcement agencies,"...' The report added:

'According to sources, during the last five years as many as 2,000 FIRs [First Information Reports] were registered over land disputes in 16 police stations of the federal capital and most of the cases are under trial in the lower courts. An official of the district courts requesting not to be named said: "Over 30,000 cases are under trial at the district level out of which 40 per cent (12,000) related to land disputes. On an average, 50 new cases are filed in the west circle and 35 in the east circle of the district courts each day".' **[42c]**

35.05 On 24 July 2011 the Daily Times reported ‘On one hand cost of property in capital is running high and on other hand land mafia is in full boom for its vested interests causing land disputes to reach considerably high while the persons involved in these cases are hopeless as they see no hope of solution to these problems as it takes decades to resolve.’ **[55g]**

35.06 The same source added:

‘According to court official, disputes over land issues are on the increase in the federal capital. Locals in and around the city allegedly sell their lands and then try to cancel the agreements. He said that land ownership is highly concentrated in rural areas of capital and a root cause of persistent poverty and instability countrywide. He said that the land dispute is a burning issue in district court because the property price is very expensive in Islamabad and with the passage of time it is increasing. He said that these cases take so long generation-to-generation but their issues are not resolving.’ **[55g]**

35.07 The Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland noted in a response dated 14 January 2010, ‘Are land disputes with a religious basis common in Pakistan? Any information regarding procedures for resolving such disputes’, that:

‘In regard to the settling of land disputes a document from the Business Anti- Corruption Portal states: “In the Pakistani countryside, many land disputes are settled in the panchayat rather than in the formal courts. As the formal judicial system has a reputation for being corrupt and for serving the interests of the wealthy and powerful only, rural people reportedly prefer to settle land disputes through informal compromises. (Business Anti-Corruption Portal (2009) Pakistan Country Profile: Land Administration)”.’ **[146a]**

35.08 The Refugee Documentation Centre quoted an article from The News on Sunday, ‘Of deeds and misdeeds’, dated 8 April 2007, which stated:

‘Theoretically, a person who has been illegally dispossessed from his land has remedies both under the civil law and the criminal law. Under the civil law, the remedies available are provided under Sections 8 and 9 of the Specific Relief Act, 1877 and under the criminal law, the remedies are available under the Illegal Dispossession Act, 2005, and Chapter XII of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1898.

‘Once a person is dispossessed illegally from his land, he shall first of all institute a criminal case against his physical dispossession under the Illegal Dispossession Act. The District and Sessions Court then has to decide on the matter of the physical dispossession but not the ownership of the said property.

‘In case, which it usually is, the land grabbers have forged documents to show for the property in question, the matter of illegal dispossession goes into the backburner and the dispute has to be taken to the civil courts for a suite for declaration to decide who the rightful owner of the land is, explains Barrister Asad Qayyum. According to Asad, determining the title of property takes quite long and once the court goes into recording the evidence it is difficult to resolve the matter in one lifetime. This, however, is not due to a lack of supporting law or legislation, but because certain individuals are above the system. (The News on Sunday (8 April 2007) Special Report).’ **[146a]**

35.09 The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) ‘Eligibility guidelines for assessing the international protection needs of members of religious minorities from Pakistan’, dated 14 May 2012, reported ‘There are allegations of collusion between law

enforcement authorities and Muslim clerics to illegally expropriate land owned by religious minorities, including Christians, by making accusations of blasphemy against them. "Land grabbing" is reported to be particularly problematic in rural areas of Punjab province.' **[40c] (p27-28)**

35.10 A UN Human Rights Council report dated 23 February 2010, referring to a written statement submitted by the Asian Legal Resource Centre (ALRC), referred to the use of blasphemy charges in land disputes as follows:

'Charges of blasphemy are indeed sometimes used for personal or political reasons. They have been used to settle scores unrelated to religious activity, such as intra-family or property disputes and more broadly to intimidate, threaten or punish people who belong to minority communities. In many cases, religious violence has occurred in villages or cities where land had grown in commercial value. Mosque leaders have allegedly exploited the religious sentiments of Muslim people to chase Christians or Ahmadis away in order to grab the land they occupied.' **[83a] (p4)**

See also Judiciary: [Blasphemy laws](#) and Freedom of religion: [Blasphemy laws](#)

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Annex A

Chronology of major events

The BBC's [Pakistan Profile: Timeline](#) – provided a chronology of key events from 1947 to the present, updated 5 June 2013, accessed 11 July 2013. **[35b]**

The South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) [Pakistan Timeline](#), from 1947 to the present, accessed 21 June 2013, also included terrorist-related incidents. **[61c]**

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Annex B

Political organisations

Pakistan People's Party (PPP)

A mainstream party advocating Islamic socialism and democracy. (Europa World Online, accessed 26 July 2011) **[6] (Political organisations)** Co-chaired by Pakistan Head of State, President Asif Ali Zardari (widower of Benazir Bhutto), and their son, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. PPP member Yusuf Raza Gilani was nominated as Prime Minister following the 2008 elections. The only party to have candidates in the National Assembly and in all four Provincial Assemblies; has formed governments at the centre and in Sindh and Balochistan provinces. (Jane's, updated 2 October 2012) **[1a] (Internal affairs)**

Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz (PML-N)

Founded in 1993 and led by Nawaz Sharif. Twice in power: from 1990 to 1993 and again from 1997 to 1999 before being overthrown in a bloodless coup by the then army chief, Pervez Musharraf. Briefly in coalition with the PPP after the 2008 elections; currently in government in Punjab province. (Jane's, updated 2 October 2012) **[1a] (Internal affairs)**

Pakistan Muslim League – Quaid-e-Azam (PML-Q)

Formed in 2001 with the support and intervention of the then military regime. Led by Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, the party became simply the Pakistan Muslim League following a split with coalition partners in 2004, but is still popularly known as the PML-Q. (Jane's, updated 2 October 2012) **[1a] (Internal affairs)**

Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM)

Led by Altaf Hussain and originally called the Mohajir Quami Movement, founded in 1984 and renamed in 1997. Representing the interests of Muslim-Urdu speaking migrants (from India, following partition), the MQM is the fourth largest party in the National Assembly with 25 seats, and part of a coalition government in Sindh with the PPP. (Jane's, updated 2 October 2012) **[1a] (Internal affairs)**

See also Ethnic groups: [Formation of MQM](#)

Awami National Party (ANP)

Formed in 1986 and essentially a left-wing Pashtun nationalist party. Led by Asfandiyar Wali Khan, the ANP emerged triumphant in the 2008 elections as the largest party in the NWFP (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) Assembly, won seats in Sindh and Balochistan as well as the National Assembly. The ANP has attempted to maintain dialogue with the militants although this has become less successful following the increase in militant activity since May 2008. (Jane's, updated 2 October 2012) **[1a] (Internal affairs)**

Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) (United Action Front)

A coalition of disparate Islamic parties including Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) - Qazi Hussain Ahmad (Deobandi), Jamiat-e-Ulema Pakistan (JUP) (Barelvi), Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam - Fazal-ur-Rehman (JUI-F) (Deobandi), Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam - Samiul Haq (JUI-S) (Deobandi), Islami Tehreek (or Tehrik) Pakistan (Shia) and Jamiat Ehl-e-Hadith (Ahl-e-Hadith). However, this coalition disintegrated in the run-up to the 2008 elections as the JI boycotted them, and the JUI-F contested them albeit under the MMA banner, winning seven seats in the National Assembly and 14 in the NWFP. (Jane's, updated 2 October 2012) **[1a] (Internal affairs)**

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Jamaat-e-Islami (JI)

A religious-based political party founded in 1941, which decrees Islam as '... a complete system of politics, economics and culture.' Opposed to the West, the JI believes sharia (Islamic law) regulations should govern all aspects of life and advocates jihad to achieve an Islamic state. (Jane's, updated 2 October 2012) **[1a] (Internal affairs)**

Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam (JUI)

The JUI is split into two factions, led by Maulana Fazal ur-Rehman (JUI-F) and Maulana Samiul Haq (JUI-S). (Europa World Online, accessed 26 July 2011) **[6] (Political organisations)** An extensive network of madrassas that train most of the leadership and much of the rank and file of the Taliban continues to be run by the JUI. Despite extremist rhetoric, Rehman, remains an important link between the MMA and government, currently a member of the broad ruling coalition holding three cabinet posts. (Jane's, updated 2 October 2012) **[1a] (Internal affairs)**

Jamiat-e-Ulema Pakistan (JUP)

Founded in 1948/49 advocating Sufi-influenced, Sunni Islamic principles with largely Mohajir support. The JUP boycotted the 2008 elections and has little popular support or organisational ability. (Europa World Online, accessed 26 July 2011) **[6] (Political organisations)** (Jane's, updated 2 October 2012) **[1a] (Internal affairs)**

All Pakistan Muslim League (APML)

The new party of former President Pervez Musharraf, established on 1 October 2010 in London and expected to contest the 2013 parliamentary elections. (Jane's, updated 2 October 2012) **[1a] (Internal affairs)**

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Other political parties

All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference

Awami Muslim League (AML)

Awami Qiyadat Party (People's Leadership Party)

Balochistan National Party—Awami (BNP—A)
Balochistan National Party—Maingal (BNP—M)
Jamhoori Watan Party (Bugti) Balochistan
Millat Party
National Party
National People’s Party (NPP)
Pakhtoonkhwa Milli Awami Party
Pakistan Awami Tehreek (PAT)
Pakistan Democratic Party (PDP)
Pakistan Muslim League—Functional (PML—F)
Pakistan People’s Party (Shaheed Bhutto Group)
Punjabi Pakhtoon Ittehad (PPI)
Sindh National Front (SNF)
Sindh Taraqi Passand Party (STPP)
Tehreek-e-Insaf (Movement for Justice)
 (Europa World Online, accessed 26 July 2011) [6] **(Political organisations)**

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Outlawed parties and organisations

Millat-e-Islamia Pakistan (MIP)

Formerly known as Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) and founded in 1984, the MIP is overtly anti-Shia with aims to make Pakistan a Sunni state. Its leader, Azam Tariq, was assassinated in October 2003 by unknown gunmen, and replaced by Mullah Muhammad Ahmed Ludhanvi. The party was banned in November 2003. (Jane’s, updated 2 October 2012) [1a] **(Internal affairs)**

Tehrik-e-Nefaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (TNSM)

The TNSM (Movement for the Enforcement of Islamic Law) is a militant tribal organisation led by Maulana Sufi Mohammad. A breakaway faction, led by Sufi Mohammad’s son-in-law, Maulana Fazlullah, and under the umbrella of the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), poses a significantly greater security threat than the original group. (Jane’s, updated 2 October 2012) [1a] **(Internal affairs)**

See also Section: Security: [Pakistani Taliban](#) and [Annex C](#)

Other banned groups

Khuddam-i-Islam (Jesh-i-Mohammadi)

Islami Tehrik-i-Pakistan (Tehrik-i-Jafria Pakistan)

Jamiat-ul Ansar (Harakat-ul-Ansar)

Hizb ut-Tahrir

Jamaat-ul Farqan (a sister organisation of the Jesh-i-Mohammadi) (Jane’s, updated 2 October 2012) [1a] **(Internal affairs)**

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Annex C

Militant groups

In its [Issues Paper 'Pakistan Militant Groups'](#), dated January 2013, the Australian Government Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) provided background information on some of Pakistan's main militant groups, as well as the Afghan Taliban and Haqqani Network based in Pakistan. **[134d]**

Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM)

Founded in 1989 and led by Syed Salahuddin, alias Maulvi Yousuf Shah, HM is the militant wing of the Jamaat-e-Islami political party in Pakistan and one of the most active militant groups in Indian-administered Kashmir (IAK). Salahuddin is based in Muzaffarabad in Pakistan administered Kashmir. (Jane's, updated 19 April 2012) **[1a] (Non-state armed groups)**

Harakat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM) (Movement of Holy Warriors)

A militant Islamist group founded in 1985 and formerly known as Harakat-ul-Ansar (HuA), the HuM, until 1999, was one of the largest and most dangerous Pakistan-based jihadist groups fighting in the IAK. Since then it has lost manpower and is much less active. Unconfirmed reports suggest the HuM may be regrouping. The US Department of State identifies Maulana Sadaatullah Khan as HuM's leader. (Jane's, updated 19 April 2012) **[1a] (Non-state armed groups)**

Jesh-e-Mohammadi/Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) (Army of the Prophet Mohammad)

Founded in December 1999 by Maulana Masood Azhar, JeM is an active militant Islamist group posing a major terrorist threat to India and Pakistan, and to Western targets within those countries. Sometimes referred to as Jaish-e-Mohammed-e-Tanzeem, JeM also goes under the aliases Khuddam-ul-Islam, Khudamul Islam and Kuddam e Islami. (Jane's, updated 19 April 2012) **[1a] (Non-state armed groups)** (South Asia Terrorism Portal, Pakistan Terrorist and Extremist Groups, accessed 21 June 2013) **[61e]**

Lashkar-e-Tayyiba/Toiba (LeT) (Army of the Pure)

Founded in 1989, the LeT (banned in Pakistan in 2002) is one of the most active and best known Kashmiri militant groups. The Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD), classified as a terrorist organisation by the UN Security Council, is considered to be a front for the LeT. (Jane's, updated 19 April 2012) **[1a] (Non-state armed groups)**

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Sectarian groups

Soldiers of the Companions of the Prophet (Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan: SSP)

Founded in the early 1980's and banned by Pakistan in 2002, the SSP was renamed Millat-e-Islamia Pakistan (MIP) in April 2003, and Ahle Sunnat wa Aljamaat Pakistan (The Sunni Party: ASWJP) in June 2008. A radical Sunni group, the SSP is no longer a significant force in Pakistan but is associated with the LeJ, and individuals and small groups still pose a threat to Shia's and Christians. The current SSP leader is Mullah Muhammad Ahmed Ludhianvi. (Jane's, updated 19 April 2012) **[1a] (Non-state armed groups)**

See also 'Punjabi Taliban' below

Soldiers of Mohammed (Sipah-e-Mohammed: SMP)

A radical Shia group in opposition to the SSP. Formed in 1993 and banned by Pakistan in 2001. Individuals from the SMP remain active and dangerous although as a group the organised threat has been reduced due to financial difficulties and the arrest of key leaders. SMP leaders Ghulam Raza Naqvi and Munawar Abbas Alvi are in prison. (Jane's, updated 19 April 2012)

[1a] (Non-state armed groups)

Secessionist groups**Balochi insurgents:**

Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), Balochistan Republican Army (BRA), Baloch People's Liberation Front (BPLF), Baloch Students' Organisation-Awami (BSO-A) and Popular Front for Armed Resistance (PFAR).

Active political groups fighting for Balochistan independence but posing no direct threat to the Pakistan government. However, attacks on public transport, fuel facilities and security forces make travel through Balochistan and Sindh provinces extremely dangerous for foreigners. A long-standing feud between the Bugti and Marri tribes, led by fierce nationalists Nawab Sardar Brahamdagh Khan Bugti and Khair Bux Marri, respectively, is a major cause of disruption in the Balochistan province. (Jane's, updated 19 April 2012) **[1a] (Non-state armed groups)**

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Other domestic groups:**Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ)**

Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), a Sunni-Deobandi terrorist outfit was formed in 1996 by a break away group of radical sectarian extremists of the Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), a Sunni extremist outfit, which accused the parent organisation of deviating from the ideals of its slain co-founder, Maulana Haq Nawaz Jhangvi. It is from Maulana Jhangvi that the LeJ derives its name. It was formed under the leadership of Akram Lahori and Riaz Basra. The LeJ is one of the two sectarian terrorist outfits proscribed on August 14, 2001, by President Pervez Musharraf. (South Asia Terrorism Portal – SATP, undated, date accessed 21 June 2013) **[61e]**

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan stated in its report, the State of human rights in 2010 (HRCP Report 2010), published 14 April 2011, that 'Media reports cited a report by Punjab Crime Investigation Department that the outlawed Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LJ) now had two splinters: Jhangvi Fidayi Forces and Sunni Fidayi Forces. The reports said that the intelligence agencies had alerted the government to the activities of the LJ in some seminaries located in the southern districts of Punjab, especially Jhang.' **[27e] (p173)**

See also 'Punjabi Taliban' below

Lashkar-e-Omar (LeO)**Tehreek-e-Jaferia Pakistan (TJP)****Jamaat-ul-Fuqra****Nadeem Commando****Popular Front for Armed Resistance****Muslim United Army****Harkat-ul-Mujahideen Al-alami(HuMA)**

(South Asia Terrorism Portal, Pakistan Terrorist and Extremist Groups, accessed 21 June 2013) [61e]

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Pakistani Taliban groups

‘Punjabi Taliban’

Harvard University’s Belfar Center for Science and International Affairs noted in an article dated April 2009 that:

‘The Punjabi Taliban network is a loose conglomeration of members of banned militant groups of Punjabi origin – sectarian as well as those focused on the conflict in Kashmir – that have developed strong connections with Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Afghan Taliban and other militant groups based in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) [Now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – KP]. They shuttle between FATA and the rest of Pakistan, providing logistical support to FATA- and Afghan-based militants to conduct terrorist operations deep inside Pakistan. Between March 2005 and March 2007 alone, for example, about 2,000 militants from southern and northern Punjab Province reportedly moved to South Waziristan and started different businesses in an effort to create logistical support networks. Given their knowledge about Punjabi cities and security structure, they have proved to be valuable partners for the TTP as it targets cities in Punjab, such as Lahore, Rawalpindi and Islamabad...

‘The most recent use of the name began in 2007, when Maulvi Nazir, a militant leader who with some official Pakistani support challenged Uzbek foreign fighters residing in South Waziristan, was hailed by some as a leader of the Punjabi Taliban. This allegation arose because Maulvi Nazir attracted many Punjabi recruits from banned organizations to fight Uzbek foreign fighters.’ [116a]

The HRCP Report 2010 stated ‘Interior Minister Rehman Malik was quoted as saying that the LJ [Lashkar-e-Jhangvi] and the SSP [Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan] were united under the banner of the Punjabi Taliban, with the southern districts of Punjab as their hub. The interior minister said 726 workers of the banned outfits were present in southern Punjab. One hundred most wanted militants belonged to this region and out of a total of 13,500 registered madrassas (seminaries) in Punjab, 7,281 were located there.’ [27e] (p173)

Tehrik-E-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)

Formed in December 2007 as an umbrella group to enable the numerous pro-Taliban groups operating in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly the NWFP) to coordinate and consolidate their activities. Following the death of TTP leader, Baitullah Mehsud, killed on 5 August 2009 by a missile from a US-operated unmanned aircraft, the TTP is now under the command of Hakimullah Mehsud. (Jane’s, 19 April 2012) [1a] (Non-state armed groups)

The Intergrated Regional Information Network (IRIN), dated 13 October 2010, provided a [guide to the main militant groups](#), splinter groups from the TTP, operating in Pakistan’s Northern provinces. [41f]

See also [Annex B: Political organisations: Outlawed parties and organisations](#)

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Annex D

Prominent people

President

Asif Ali Zardari (BBC Pakistan Profile, 5 June 2013) **[35c] (Leaders)**

NB: President-elect: Mamnoon Hussain – takes office September 2013. (BBC News, 30 July 2013) **[35n]**

Please note that the above information post-dates the narrative cut-off date of 19 July 2013 to include the presidential elections held on 30 July 2013.

Prime Minister

Nawaz Sharif (BBC Pakistan Profile, 5 June 2013) **[35c] (Leaders)**

The [Pakistan government](#) website, accessed 8 July 2013, provided a list of Ministries and Divisions, which included the relevant Federal Ministers. **[29]**

Bhutto, Benazir

Prime Minister of Pakistan from 1988 to 1990, and from 1993 to 1996. Killed in a bomb attack on 27 December 2007 as she was leaving an election rally in Rawalpindi. (BBC News, 27 December 2007) **[35d]**

Bhutto, Bilawal Zardari

Son of Benazir Bhutto and Asif Ali Zardari, he was appointed chairman of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) after his mother's death in late December 2007. However, his father and co-chairman of the PPP, Asif Ali Zardari, effectively ran the party. (Daily Times, 31 December 2007) **[55e]**

Hussain, Altaf

Leader of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) and currently living in exile in London where he fled to in 1992. He is now a UK citizen but continues to run the MQM. (Elections.com, accessed 4 June 2013) **[39b]**

See also Ethnic groups: [Muttahida Qaumi Movement \(MQM\)](#)

Musharraf, Pervez

(Former president and army chief Gen) (r). Now living in self-imposed exile in London. On 1 October 2010 he announced another faction of PML, called the All Pakistan Muslim League. 'He said the party would take part in the 2013 general elections. Musharraf said he feared Pakistan could break up without a change in leadership and apologised for the 'mistakes' made during his regime.' (HRCP Report 2010, 14 April 2011) **[27e] (p192)**

Sharif, Mohammad Nawaz

Prime Minister of Pakistan from November 1, 1990 to July 18, 1993, and from February 17, 1997 to October 12, 1999. His government was overthrown by the General Pervez Musharraf-led military coup in 1999. (Elections.com, accessed 4 June 2013) **[39a]** Mr Sharif returned from exile in November 2007, and in May 2013 his Pakistani Muslim League party won the parliamentary elections. (BBC Timeline: Pakistan, 5 June 2013, accessed 11 July 2013) **[35b]**

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Annex E

Glossary of local terms for tribal customs

As quoted from the Aurat Foundation Annual Report 2010 **[57b]**

Kala-kali

Balochi and Seraiki term literally meaning disreputable man-disreputable woman (who have brought disgrace to the family or clan), a 'crime' that allows culturally condoned killing in the name of honor of a man or woman charged with an illicit relationship.

Karo-kari

Sindhi term literally meaning disreputable man-disreputable woman (who have brought disgrace to the family or clan), a 'crime' that allows culturally condoned killing in the name of honor of a man or woman charged with an illicit relationship.

Ghairat

Loosely translated as honor but is considered a chivalrous adherence to tradition and culture in the context of social relations.

Jirga

An assembly of male elders, usually tribal, who make decisions regarding social issues; an informal body for resolving disputes. The term is Pushto but the practice exists across Pakistan. Jirgas were banned by the Sindh High Court but they continue to function. They are dominated by influential members of the community who are usually conservative and patriarchal. Decisions taken by them are known to be anti-women.

Swara

A Pashto word denoting a child marriage custom in tribal areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan. This custom is tied to blood feuds between different tribes and clans where young girls are forcibly married to members of the enemy clan in order to compensate for a crime committed against a member of that clan (always by a male) and to end a feud.

Vanni

A child marriage custom in tribal areas of Pakistan, also widely prevalent in Punjab. This custom is tied to blood feuds among the different tribes and clans where young girls are forcibly married to members of opposing clans in order to resolve feuds or compensate for a crime. Vanni can be avoided if the girl's clan agrees to pay blood money, called Diyat (دیّت). Otherwise the young bride may be forced to spend her life paying for a crime committed by her male relatives.

Watta Satta

A tribal custom in Pakistan of exchanging brides between two families. Both families must have a daughter and a son, and be willing to betroth them to the daughter and son of the other family. That is to say, in order for a family to marry off a son to a daughter of another family, it must have a daughter to marry off in return to the same family.

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Annex F

List of abbreviations

AI	Amnesty International
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CPJ	Committee to Protect Journalists
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office (UK)
FH	Freedom House
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IAG	Illegal Armed Group
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICRC	International Committee for Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MSF	Médecins sans Frontières
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODPR	Office for Displaced Persons and Refugees
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
RSF	Reporters sans Frontières
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
STC	Save The Children

TB	Tuberculosis
TI	Transparency International
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCHR	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USSD	United States State Department
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

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Annex H

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Annex I

Correspondence from Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Emails:

[11c]

From:

Sent: 30 January 2009 07:53

To:

Cc:

Subject: RE: Passport exit/entry stamps

Glad to be of help.

In theory Pakistani passport holders have the passports stamped on entry and exit across all ports and legal border crossings, without any exception that I'm aware of. However, corruption is a problem and in practice an individuals would often be able to avoid having their passports stamped, e.g. by paying a bribe etc.

Regards,

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[11d]

-----Original Message-----

From: @fco.gsi.gov.uk

Sent: 09 January 2009 4:35 AM

To: @fco.gsi.gov.uk

Cc: @fco.gsi.gov.uk

Subject: RE: Pakistan Enquiry

I've consulted colleagues here who have advised that although apostasy (conversion of religion) is not illegal in Pakistan, people who change their faith are regularly charged with blasphemy and insulting Islam. This is usually when a conversion is made to an entirely separate religion (e.g. becoming Christian). Arguably a Sunni Muslim becoming Shia is a conversion of belief within a single religion and we are not currently aware of examples of blasphemy legal proceedings against Shias by Sunnis.

But conversion aside, there are incidents of sectarian violence - mainly Sunnis against Shias - in the parts of Pakistan where the Shia minority are most prevalent. For example, in January 2007, during the Shia festival of Ashura, at least two suicide bombers attacked Shia gatherings and two rockets were launched at a Shia mosque in Bannu. Authorities respond to these attacks, although in Pakistan police investigation etc does not equate to protection or necessarily to justice through legal proceedings.

Hope this helps!

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[11h]

From:
Sent: 24 June 2008 10:50
To:
Subject: RE: Pakistan query re. access to services by illegitimate child

Dear

In Islam a Muslim woman cannot marry a non-Muslim man - though the opposite is permissible. If a Muslim woman and a non Muslim man did have a child it would be considered illegitimate on the grounds that they would not (could not) be legally married. If this were to happen here in Pakistan or elsewhere in an Islamic country it would be considered adultery. The Islamic punishment for adultery is to be stoned to death. In reality it would result at least in a lengthy imprisonment and considerable social stigma.

I haven't received further information regarding access to services by illegitimate child. As soon as i received i will inform you.

Thanks

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[11i]

-----Original Message-----

From:
Sent: 02 October 2008 6:20 AM
To:
Cc:
Subject: Re: Pakistan Blasphemy laws

1. What is the procedure for an individual to initiate a complaint against an Ahmadi (or any other person) directly with a Magistrates' court?

Anyone aggrieved by some illegal action or privy to information about a crime can register a complaint (fir) [first information report] with the police. in case there is no crime, or the police happen to be the first one know, the police can become a complainant too.

If the police refuse to register a FIR on a complaint, the district and sessions judge (not a magistrate) can order registration of a FIR under Article 199 of the Constitution / Section 154 of Criminal Procedure Code, which is the prosecution story to be substantiated by inquiry / investigation report. 'challan' is the formal charge framed in a court.

Section 196 of the Criminal Procedure Code makes the registration of certain FIRs hard, requiring an inquiry by a senior police officer (in case of Section 295 b and c, a superintendent)

This is the law, however in case of blasphemy allegations, we have seen laws being violated and procedures ignored on one pretext or the other.

2. Once such a complaint has been lodged, what procedure does the court follow, and what are the timescales for such actions?

The charge is framed, accused can deny and standard procedure of evidence, witnesses, cross examination takes place - if the offense is bailable the court may also grant bail whenever requested. finally the judgement, [followed by] appeals against the verdict if felt necessary.

298 -c, however is non- bailable unless the accused can successfully contest that the offense is unfounded or cannot be substantiated. this can happen at investigation or trial.

3. Who are the court permitted to release documents to with regard to such a complaint?

All parties to the case have the right to acquire documents from any court of law, even the press can manage [to obtain] the copies of FIRs and decisions.

4. Are complaints lodged with courts reported in newspapers?

Usually they are reported but sometimes not, if small town or accused party too powerful.

5. On the first question, my colleague in the UK was under the impression that a charge had be made against a person under the blasphemy laws (298c of the Penal Code in this instance), with the police making a First Instance Report (FIR) before the charge could be made. Is it possible for someone to complain directly to a magistrate, i.e. bypass the police?

In case of non-Muslim accused, there is a strong tendency among authorities to register a case promptly and without due investigation. there is usually no need for a magistrate to initiate a proceeding under the blasphemy laws, however technically it is not impossible because a first class magistrate is empowered to hear cases under 298 –c. but a first information report will have to be registered by police even in this case.

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From: (UKBA International Group) (Protect)
Sent: 10 November 2010 04:25
To: (Restricted)
Cc: (Restricted)
Subject: RE: Marriage by proxy

Hi

Please note that proxy (telephonic) marriage is acceptable in Islam and also under the Muslim Family laws ordinance 1961. The condition is that both the parties (Bride and the Groom) should be present at both ends with their witnesses. Whereas in Ahmadis the proxy marriage can be contracted even without the presence of the bride and the groom and with only the presence of their Waliys (representatives).

If a marriage is contracted with one of the above procedures and the marriage certificate has all the necessary attestations and is registered with the concerned authorities it can be considered as a valid marriage.

Regards

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[11o]

From: * (Restricted)
Sent: 09 November 2010 11:27
To: (Restricted)
Cc:
Subject: RE: Marriage by proxy

Hi

My understanding (but I'm cc'ing to those more expertly than me) is:

- Consular Section (and Visas, I think) do not recognise a proxy marriage done where one of the party was in the UK, and the other was in Pakistan.
- You should establish where each party was for the marriage. If one was in Saudia Arabia (where proxy marriages are recognised) and one was in Pakistan (where it is also recognised), we would recognise it as legitimate.
- How do you tell? Look at the passport stamps in their passports, to establish where they both were on the claimed date. Also request to see the subsequent wedding photos, and marriage certificate. The marriage certificate will sometimes tell if it was a proxy marriage (it will include the name of e.g. the groom, and person representing the groom).

I have contact details for a person at the General Registrar's Office who can may be able to give the definitive definition - can get them to you for tomorrow, if that's helpful.

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Letters:

[11f]

Border and Immigration Agency
Country of Origin Information Service
Home Office

6 February 2008



**British
High Commission
Islamabad**

Chancery
Diplomatic Enclave, Ramna 5
P.O. Box 1122, Islamabad

Telephone:
E-mail: @fco.gov.uk

Transgender and transexualism in Pakistan

Dear

You, and your predecessor ..., have been in contact with some questions on transgender and transexualism in Pakistan. We have been in contact with experts locally to provide information on these issues, including Maria Ahmad, a producer and journalist for the private TV station GEO TV, whose work includes a recent documentary on transsexualism/gender in Pakistan. The information provided was requested as background information. We judge it to be well-founded, but request that these findings are not shared widely (or published) without the permission of those who provided the information.

1) Is it lawful for a man or woman to change their sex (by medical means) in Pakistan?

'There are two parallel legal systems in Pakistan : the constitution of Pakistan and the Federal Sharia law (religious law) of Islam. Under the Constitution of Pakistan there are only two recognized sexes i.e. male or female. The Constitution does not address the status of a person who has changed their gender through an operation. On the other hand the Sharia Law does not recognize any such operations and forbids them strictly. It is under this law that the various cases of gender operations have been arrested and charged in Paki[stan] courts. Depending on the severity [of transsexualism] various punishments have been prescribed in each case.

'There are various degrees of the crime of transsexuality... Actually changing one's sex for commercial reasons, for purposes of marriage (like the case of summer 2007) or pure cases of physical gratification. Given the stereotypical, ignorant approach to the subject, lack of researched knowledge on the subject and a taboo status of the issue, these people's reasons to undergo sex-change operations are always reduced to mere animalistic and crude lust i.e. physical gratification. Depending on the reasons that the jury/judge deduce, the transsexuals might be put in jail or prescribed lashes. In strict Sharia Law there can be worse punishments like stoning to death, but haven't been practiced by law yet. Stoning to death has been done in some rural areas where the local elders hold court to decide the matter. Let me add that the constitution states that discrimination on basis of sex will not be entertained anywhere in the country. But it has failed to safeguard the rights of these people too.'

2) Do you know of any examples of people being arrested and tried in the Shari'a courts for transsexualism? What is the crime under the Shari'a Courts that transsexuals have been sentenced /previously arrested?

'The crime of transsexualism or undergoing sex operations essentially is translated as tampering with the Al Mighty's creations. That is deemed as a crime. Also please remember that the understanding of the various angles and approaches of this issue/subject is limited to very few due to bans and taboos on the subject. This in turn then influences the perception and final judgment meted out to 'criminals of sexual crime'

'There's no recorded history of such cases being tried in Sharia courts. Progressive and moderate interpretations of Islamic thought subscribe to this interpretation 'Religious law only makes exceptions when a doctor prescribes the operation for a grown adult due to a severe and extremely dangerous health risk for the patient. Under religious law there should be absolutely no alternative for the patient and once the patient undergoes the operation, then s/he should be treated according to the new gender.' [is this a quote from a legal text/procedure?] This is a quote from an Islamic scholar of the progressive school. His name is Khursheed Nadeem and he is the Country Director of an NGO called 'Organization for Research and Education' in Islamabad. Classic and conventional Islamic interpretation prescribes to lashings and stonings - a practice that was prescribed for adultery in early Islam, but practiced at the height of the crime [not quite sure what you mean by 'practiced at the height of crime']. Today stonings and lashings are carried out at the highest degree of sexual crime. So far a legal court in Pakistan has not ordered this punishment for any such criminal (remember there are only a handful cases tried in courts). But when these cases are caught in rural areas, under feudal and tribal laws and customs, eunuchs and transsexuals are lashed in public. The reported incidence of this is few and far between because the transsexuals flee to areas where their communities are relatively more accepted.'

3) Is 'sex realignment treatment' (i.e. sex change treatment) available in Pakistan - if so where? 'There is no 'legal' operation in Pakistan for sex realignment. No registered hospital conducts the operation freely. However all sex change operations are done in 'back alley hospitals.' Qualified sexologists and surgeons perform the operation in private and hidden clinics. But there are unqualified and dangerous operations too where excessive blood flow causes loss of life. A third form of these operations are conducted by quacks and 'spiritual doctors' who reside in the inner part of the cities.'

4) Once an individual has changed their sex, what is their status within Pakistan law?

'After a sex change operation, logically the person then has their new identity and should change their legal documents i.e. ID Card, passport etc. accordingly. In Pakistan when these

people [transsexuals] file their papers to change their documents they have complained that the officials on duty do not change their sex on the documents. This is accompanied by ridicule, abuse, mental torture and in several instances complaints to the police for arresting the transgender. They are not provided any legal counsel in case of arrests, unless they arrange for their own lawyer.

'Most cases pertain to men changing their sex rather than women. The word Hijra is used to describe the whole lot of them - psychological patients, biological cases, those who do it to earn money, etc.'

5) If it is illegal to be transgender/transsexual have there been any prosecutions?

'People are sent to jails and they spend their life there because the cases are forgotten. In rural areas sometimes they are stoned to death under local law (jirga system) or left to their own means.'

'There have been minor cases in towns where these people were picked up by police. The only notable case for many years has been Shumail's case from this summer [2007]. Under strict implementation of the law, these transsexuals should be arrested for the crime of an illegal operation but it requires a lengthy procedure, as well as a proper jail for them to send to. (in an ordinary jail men would abuse them sexually) Mostly local administration knows of these people but the police don't arrest them - just harass them. Since the Hijras earn a livelihood through begging or dancing at weddings/births, the police often blackmail them for their freedom. Alternately for any random crime or increment in crime in an area, the Hijras' slums are raided - which leave many injured, abused or arrested without any criminal evidence. In answer to your question in particular, being arrested for being a transsexual is rare - usually a fake or minor case is slapped to justify the arrest. No doctor has yet been arrested for conducting a sex operation. But when and if transsexuals/ transgenders are arrested they are tossed in jails and the files are forgotten.'

6) Can you provide any information on how transgender/transsexual people are treated in Pakistani society - do they face social discrimination / harassment / imprisonment, etc?

'Transgenders are called the 'third form' or 'hijras' in Urdu language. there are no apt words for hermaphrodites, transgenders, eunuchs, transsexuals, etc.. They are all lumped together under the word Hijra. Most people just ignore them, some revere them, give them alms and clothes, men generally ridicule them. The two biggest hurdles in their peaceful life is the sexual harassment from men, including thrashings in public and verbal abuse that they have to face from everyone. They learn to live on the periphery of society showing up to beg and dance on weddings and the birth of children in exchange for some money. Currently they have no place or industry to work in because they are harassed wherever they go. education is an impossibility for them. if they adopt children and raise them, eventually they even leave them because of society's pressures.'

7) 'Hirja' appears to apply to men who behave/wish to become women. Does the word also apply to both female transsexuals (i.e. women who wish to become men)?

'Yes, the origin of the word Hijra corresponds to those women. But in Pakistan, the instance of females undergoing an operation to become a man are one in a million, i.e. terribly rare. Women who behave like men are just called tomboys, never Hijras. On the other hand, as I mentioned earlier, men who behave, act, undergo operation, suffer with biological, psychological issues of gender are all termed as Hijras in Pakistan.'

8) If legal, would a transsexual/transgender person be able to obtain protection from the authorities (if threatened by non-state agents, such as family, religious groups)?

'No they will not because of the prevailing myths and stereotypes about these people. Almost all of Pakistani society with the exception of a couple of doctors or researchers or people close to transgenders, believes that these people undergo this operation to fulfill their sexual desires and wishes. they refuse to believe this behavior can be induced by social learning, psychological handicap or biological/genetic imbalance. if this information is made public to the people through media, for a certain period of time and awareness success is a 100% then social and psychological help for these people will be easier to come. This will also provide them safe and legal means to earn a livelihood because the people will be tolerant and understanding about their situation.'

9) Is someone who is transgender/transsexual commits a crime likely to face harsher treatment than other Pakistanis because of they are transgender if prosecuted?

'No their treatment meted out by law is exactly the same as other offenders, however the social repercussions, abuse and mental torture add to the agony of transsexuals.'

10) How many transsexuals are there approximately in Pakistan?

'There is no precise number of these transsexuals. According to their own tight-knit community there are at least 50,000 Hijras across Pakistan. The majority of these 50000 Hijras are men [i.e. men who behave/have had treatment to become women]. The ratio of women to men is easily 10 to 50000.

11) Would it be possible for someone who is transgender/transsexual (ie has changed or is in the process of changing sex) to obtain identification documents such as ID cards and passports in their new sexual identity and name?

'So far i've spoken to several transsexuals who've told me that they have tried to acquire new ID cards or traveling documents but they have been turned down. Officials at these offices demand health and operation records for these people but since the operation is illegal in Pakistan no doctor can issue a sex change certificate that supports the transsexuals' claim. Public humiliation, aggravation and bureaucracy are part and parcel of this process.'

'I think its possible to obtain ID documents in their new sexual identity but it may be a protracted process requiring medical certification of the gender. NADRA does not appear to have a clear policy on this, as such applications are seen as exceptional cases (Information is not available on open source, would be better to consult a lawyer).' Was this Sarman's view, and would you be willing to put this forward as an answer?

Yours sincerely

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Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

[11g]

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Border and Immigration Agency
Country of Origin Information Service

Tel:

Dear

Pakistan Legal Query – Double Jeopardy Law

1. As requested, our post in Islamabad has consulted legal advice with regard to double jeopardy laws in Pakistan. The reply from the law firm Khan & Piracha is as follows:

(Begins):

We have reviewed the provisions of law relating to double jeopardy to ascertain whether any individual who has been convicted in the U.K and has served time can be tried and sentenced for the same crime on his return to Pakistan and would advise as under:

Under Section 403 of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1898 (the 'Code') no person who has once been tried by a Court of competent jurisdiction for an offence and convicted or acquitted of such offence shall during the pendency of the acquittal or conviction be liable to be tried again for the same offence. However, a person so acquitted or convicted may be tried for (a) any distinct offence for which a separate charge might have been made i.e. where more than one offence are committed by the same person; (b) a different offence arising out of the consequences of the act which constituted the first offence but which consequences together with the act constitute a different offence and (c) any other offence constituted by the same acts which constituted the first offence but which the court which first tried him was not competent to try.

To invoke Section 403 of the Code the following conditions must be satisfied:

- i) The accused has already been tried for the offence charged against him,
- ii) the trial was held by a court of competent jurisdiction, and
- iii) a judgment or order of acquittal or conviction has been issued.

The rule against 'autrefois convict' i.e. double jeopardy has received recognition in Article 13(A) of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan 1973 (the 'Constitution') which provides a constitutional guarantee to the effect that no person shall be prosecuted or punished for the same offence more than once.

To ascertain whether the person in question i.e. the person convicted by a court in U.K. is covered by Section 403 of the Code it needs to be determined whether the conditions set out for invoking Section 403 of the Code are met. The conditions set out in i) and iii) above are clearly met. The Code is silent on the issue of whether the term 'court of competent jurisdiction' as used therein extends to cover a foreign court of competent jurisdiction. However, where the

legislature has intended to extend cover of any statute to foreign courts it has done so by specific reference i.e. in the Control of Narcotic Substances Act, 1997 specific reference is made to a 'foreign court of competent jurisdiction' and it is therefore safe to conclude that a 'court of competent jurisdiction' for purposes of Section 403 of the Code has to be a court within the territorial jurisdiction of Pakistan and hence condition ii) above is not met in the present instance. Likewise, the constitutional guarantee provided by Article 13 (A) of the Constitution will, in our opinion, not extend to an offence which has been tried and convicted outside Pakistan as the doctrine of dual sovereignty permits successive prosecutions by two states for the same conduct.

In view of the above, it would appear that the person in question could face a trial and conviction in Pakistan for the offence for which he has already been tried and convicted in the U.K.

Please note that under Section 365 of the Pakistan Penal Code (the 'PPC') any person who kidnaps or abducts any person with intent to cause that person to be secretly and wrongfully confined is subject to punishment with simple or rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to seven years and fine. However, under Section 365A of the PPC where any person kidnaps or abducts any person for the purpose of extorting from the person kidnapped or any person interested in such person any movable or immovable property or valuable security or compliance with any demand in cash or kind for obtaining release of the kidnapped person, the punishment is death or imprisonment for life and forfeiture of property. The fact that the offence was committed against a high profile person adds the dimension of use of influence to expedite prosecution against the offender.

We are not fully conversant with the facts of the prosecution in the U.K. and therefore cannot give any specific advice with respect to the circumstances of that case. However, as a case for double jeopardy is in any event not made out any discussion of the same would be academic. We would nonetheless point out that unless a case of kidnapping for purposes of extortion is made out the death penalty will not apply and the maximum penalty for simple kidnapping will be seven years.

(Ends)

2. You had also asked about availability of a drug Paroxetine in Pakistan. Our post have made enquiries locally and have established that it is available, costing 432 rupees for a 20mg 10-capsule strip (approx. £3.50). It is sold under the name 'Seroxat'**Error! Reference source not found.**

Yours sincerely

Pakistan Team

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British
High Commission
Islamabad

9 November 2009

According to media reports, the Supreme Court ruled in July 09 that Pakistan's hijra community should be entitled to 'protection guaranteed under Article four (rights of individuals to be dealt with in accordance of law) and Article nine (security of person) of the Constitution'. Aside from many blogs and a few news articles I can find little information about this ruling. Is it possible to get a copy of the ruling, or do you have any more information on the issue?

We consulted internally with our Liaison Prosecutor.

He cited articles from the Dawn newspaper below. He concluded that it was unlikely that a judgement would have been issued in this case, as the second report makes it clear that the case stands adjourned. He also noted that the Court's rulings in this case are essentially declaratory and have little binding effect on the government; declaring that the plaintiffs are Pakistani citizens and entitled to basic state provisions like education and the protection of law will not do anything to actually remove the disadvantages they face in society.

SC orders equal benefits for transvestites

By Nasir Iqbal

Wednesday, 15 Jul, 2009

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court has ordered that transvestites, being equal citizens of Pakistan, should also benefit from the federal and provincial governments' financial support schemes such as the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP). 'They are citizens of Pakistan and enjoy the same protection guaranteed under Article four (rights of individuals to be dealt with in accordance of law) and Article nine (security of person) of the Constitution,' ruled a three-member bench comprising Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, Justice Muhammad Sair Ali and Justice Jawwad S Khawaja on Tuesday.

The bench had taken up the petition seeking establishment of a commission to emancipate effeminate men ostracised by the society for no fault of theirs.

Islamic jurist Dr Mohammad Aslam Khaki, who researched on the conditions of the ignominious merry-makers and discovered them to be the most oppressed and deprived segment of the society and subjected to humiliation and molestation, had filed the petition for the welfare of the transvestites left by the society to live by begging, dancing and prostitution.

Parents give their hermaphrodite children into the care of gurus (leaders of transvestites) at a very tender age who abuse them instead of providing them the opportunity to get education.

Dr Khaki took up their cause after police raided and arrested several transvestites in Taxila recently, pleading before the court that being a welfare state it was the responsibility of the government to look after this community. He told the court that Shoaib Mansoor who produced a blockbuster film 'Khuda ka Liya' was also planning to come up with another movie to highlight the miserable lives of these people.

During the proceedings, Roop and Shazia along with their community representatives appeared before the court to narrate harrowing details of abuse they receive from the society, police and gangsters mainly because of their weak financial conditions, especially when their fathers and brothers did not accept them as family members.

'My appearance before the court today may cost me my life,' Shazia feared, saying already she was receiving threats from different quarters. 'Once I was implicated in a false case and subjected to immense sexual torture by the police in their custody,' she alleged.

The court asked the federal as well as the provincial governments to help them overcome their financial difficulties by supporting them from programmes like the BISP and Baitul Mal or provincial support programmes so that they could adopt a respectable livelihood.

The court also asked the petitioner to negotiate with the non-governmental organisations working in social sectors to devise some welfare programmes for the transvestites.

The provincial social welfare departments were also asked to come up with suggestions for the uplift of these people to reduce their miseries and difficulties.

To protect them from thugs or goons, the apex court ordered the law-enforcers to provide security to these people so that their rights were not violated. The court also asked senior police officials to take action against delinquent police officers who harass the transvestites.

The court directed the provincial social welfare departments to complete the survey and registration of transvestites to save them from the life of shame.

Both the petitioner and transvestites present in the court said they were compelled to lead an immoral life by offering themselves for dancing or prostitution and they were also required to pay handsome amount to self-styled gurus or to the police.

'We are not accepted anywhere in the society and degraded and humiliated everywhere,' the transvestites said.

The bench remarked that being Muslims as well as human beings, parents of such gender-confused children should look after them without discrimination but, it lamented, they throw them on roads to suffer throughout their lives.

The court also expressed surprise that one of the computerised national identity card of the eunuch bears a photograph of a female but in the gender column, she was recognised as male.

The court adjourned the proceedings till third week of August.

Supreme Court asks govt to care for transvestites

By Nasir Iqbal

Tuesday, 18 Aug, 2009

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Monday virtually put transvestites in the care of the government by directing it to make their lives easier and safer.

'Eunuchs are also the citizens of Pakistan and should be given basic fundamental rights guaranteed in the constitution,' Chief Justice Iftikhar Mohammad Chaudhry remarked.

'They are human beings and nobody has a right to hate them.' A three-judge bench comprising the chief justice, Justice Chaudhry Ijaz Ahmed and Justice Ghulam Rabbani had taken up a petition seeking the establishment of a commission to emancipate effeminate men ostracised by the society for no fault of their's.

Islamist jurist Dr Mohammad Aslam Khaki, who researched into the conditions of the ignominious merry-makers and discovered them to be the most oppressed and deprived segment of the society that is subjected to humiliation and molestation, had filed the petition for the welfare of the unfortunate and vulnerable people left by the society to live by begging, dancing and prostitution.

The court ordered the federal as well as the provincial governments and the social welfare secretaries to interact with representatives of transvestites, offer them incentives like education and find respectable jobs for their social uplift to bring them into the mainstream.

For ensuring security of transvestites, the interior secretary and the provincial police officers were also ordered to appoint focal persons in districts and tehsils, and also forward copies of cases registered against them to the Supreme Court registrar, social welfare departments and the inspectors general of police. This will help safeguarding transvestites from being booked under fabricated and fake cases.

The federal and the provincial health secretaries are also required to coordinate with the representatives of transvestites to provide free of cost health facilities to them. Secretary education and Chief Commissioner Islamabad were also asked to provide education facility to them if they were interested.

The court was told that 2,167 transvestites had been registered in the Punjab, while only 56 in Balochistan's 14 districts. Similarly, in NWFP 324 transvestites were registered, as a majority of them had left the province due to the law and order situation.

Meanwhile, in four-page suggestions for the rehabilitation of transvestites, petitioner Dr Khaki said they should be declared as women for all legal purposes and therefore should not be arrested by male police. Similarly, raid for showing vulgar dances should be conducted under the supervision of magistrates or local nazims instead of the police.

The petitioner was in favour of constituting rehabilitation committees at district level to protect transvestites from the highhandedness of police and thugs.

He also asked for setting up a commission by provincial governments to prepare recommendations and plans for their legal and social uplift.

He said in the national identity card, their gender should be described as Khwaja Sara and special national identity cards like the ones for disabled persons should be issued to them.

Dr Khaki said their rights to availing public utilities like public toilets, transport compartments and hospital admissions should also be clarified.

The petitioner said small loans should be granted to transvestites to establish businesses. The court adjourned the case for two months with a direction to provincial governments to complete registration process before the next date of hearing.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/14-the-legal-challenge-zj-05>

This letter has been compiled by staff of the British /High Commission Islamabad entirely from information obtained from the sources indicated. The letter does not reflect the opinions of the author(s), nor any policy of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The author(s) have compiled this letter in response to a request from UKBA and any further enquiries regarding its contents should be directed to UKBA.

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British
High Commission
Islamabad

29th November 2010

The UK Border Agency made the following enquiries:-

- If the Nizam-e-Adl Regulation 2009 is officially still in effect, or whether it was revoked following the Swat military offensive?
- Did the proposed Apostasy Act 2006 ever get any further consideration in the National Assembly?
- Is the criminal age of responsibility still set at 7, or has it been raised to 12? Is there any progress on the Child Protection Bill?

We referred this enquiry to Ian Dawson, Political Section, who provided the following information:-

The Nizam-e-Adl Regulation 2009 is still in force in the Malakand Division. Its case management provisions have been deemed so successful in dealing with court backlogs that USAID is considering a law reform programme based on disseminating the good practice. This is not to say that some elements of the Nizam-e-Adl are highly regressive. On an aside, I recently learned that the Sexual Offences Reform Act passed by Musharraf in 2006 does not apply in Malakand, leaving the victims of sexual violence vulnerable under the regressive Zina Ordinance.

The Apostasy Bill was tabled by the right-wing Sunni based religious alliance, the Muttahida Masjlis-i-Amal (MMA) in the National Assembly. The Bill was sent to the Standing Committee in May 2007 for detailed consideration. The Bill failed to emerge from Committee before the dissolution of the National Assembly in 2007. The MMA boycotted the elections, eventually held in early 2008, and the alliance crumbled. They have no meaningful parliamentary base in the current Assembly.

The Pakistan Penal Code, 1860 states, in Section 82 that a child under seven years of age cannot commit a criminal offence. A child between 7 and under 12 years of age can commit an offence, if the 'child has sufficient maturity of understanding to judge the nature and consequences of his act'. In effect, it falls to the prosecution to prove that such a child has a 'mischievous discretion'.

The Child Protection Bill is still not law. In July the government referred the Bill to the Council of Islamic Ideology, which ruled that raising the age of criminal responsibility was not contrary to Sharia. The Child Protection Bill was sent back to the Interior Ministry, where it joins a number of other bills awaiting consideration by the National Assembly. Following the 18th Amendment, child protection and welfare will become provincial subjects. As a consequence the Punjab and Khyber-Pukhtunkwa provinces have passed Child Protection measures during 2010.

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British
High Commission
Islamabad

20 January 2011

The UK Border Agency requested the following information:-

- What is the process to record your faith in a Pakistani passport?
- Is a stamp issued to confirm the individuals Ahmadiyya faith?
- Who applies the stamp in the Pakistani passport?
- Can the stamp be applied at any stage?
- Could a bribe be paid for an Ahmadiyya stamp to be issued?
- Do those with the Ahmadiyya faith declared in their passport have problems with immigration when departing from Pakistan?

In relation to the first four questions only, the British High Commission consulted with an official working within the Passport Circle within the Government of Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency. He responded as follows:-

'There is no stamp of 'Ahmadiyya'. Its printed on second page of the passport...it's one time process and it can be printed only at once when passport is printed'.

The British High Commission also consulted with a locally employed member of staff within the British High Commission, whose opinion was as follows:-

'The old PAK ppt had religion column on the biodata page. The new PAK machine readable ppts were introduced in Oct 2004 when religion was not being mentioned. In 2006 the authorities started putting religion on annotation page. The passport database is interconnected with the NADRA's system, where the things are being tallied. During the database recording for a new PAK ppt, religion question is asked. If there is any discrepancy the applicants are asked to submit affidavit on this to remove doubts.

1. At the time of data recording for a new passport questions are asked verbally including religion.
2. There has never been any stamp impression (Rubber Stamp) for religion/faith on the manual (old) PAK ppt. However the faith/religion is printed on the annotation page of the new PAK ppt. The term Ahmadiyya is printed on page two of the passport. We are not aware of there being a wet ink stamp.
3. The passport and Immigration authorities are responsible for printing the biodata and additional info of the applicant (faith/religion) on the passports both on manual and machine readable.
4. Yes, but in such cases applicants needs to reapply for modifications and new passport will be issued.
5. The system can be abused by culprits by different ways. It is possible that a bribe could be paid at the time the passport is issued, but we do not have any direct evidence of this.
6. There isn't any problem in departing from Pakistan for Ahmadis holding Pakistani ppt. As long as the visa and passport is genuine.'

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British
High Commission
Islamabad

2 March 2011

Can converts to Christianity could live freely and openly in Pakistan? Are they at risk of an 'honour' killing owing to their conversion? Is internal relocation an option, i.e. would any areas be deemed 'safer' for Christians than others?

We consulted internally with our Political Section, who deal with humanitarian and human rights issues. In short, it is difficult to corroborate the real situation, as this is a frequently hidden problem; our view is that converts would probably not want to draw additional attention to themselves. However, we have ascertained the following anecdotal evidence from our dealings with external contacts in Pakistan:-

- Firstly, in our opinion it would be difficult for Christian converts to live freely and openly in Pakistan, as converts over and above being Christian. It is our view that people who are known to have converted to Christianity suffer serious discrimination, for example in the workplace or by the authorities. It is far more difficult for people in Pakistan who are known to have converted to Christianity, than it is for people who were born Christian.
- We understand that it would be rare for someone to convert to Christianity, or at least to do so openly, in Pakistan. It is therefore something of note for the community, with potential repercussions.
- Our Political Section considered that internal relocation may be possible, in theory, as there were Christian communities in many urban areas such as Rawalpindi, and across Punjab and Sindh provinces. Due to the anonymity afforded by moving to an urban area, it may be feasible to relocate and not reveal the fact of the conversion. However, our view was also that the Christian communities were themselves becoming increasingly isolated from other communities. Therefore whilst it may be more difficult to socially exclude and harass a Christian who lives in a larger Christian community, it does not necessary preclude that harassment.
- Finally, it was our view that Christian converts were not at risk of an honour killing, despite these difficulties, as these are normally related to property disputes or perceived dishonourable behaviour rather than matters of faith or principle.

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