# Resolution on the discrimination against girls in Pakistan, in particular the case of Malala Yousafzai

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The European Parliament adopted a resolution on discrimination against girls in Pakistan, strongly condemning the violent attack on Malala Yousafzai, a 14-year-old girl from the Swat Valley, who was shot in the head and neck by the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) on 9 October 2012 and severely wounded.

The resolution was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ALDE, Greens/EFA, ECR GUE/NGL and EFD groups.

It notes that Malala Yousafzai had become a national symbol of resistance against the Taliban's efforts to deprive girls of an education through blogs she wrote since the age of 11, receiving in December 2011 the National Youth Peace Prize, which has been renamed in her honour the National Malala Peace Price.

Members call on the Government of Pakistan to **ensure the safety of Malala Yousafzai and her family and to bring to justice those responsible for the assault**. It wants Pakistan to ensure the safety of other human rights activists – particularly women and girls who become active in society and politics – who have received threats from the Taliban and other extremist groups, and it expresses its concern about the reported threats against 17-year-old Hinna Khan and her family. Parliament states that it is **deeply worried about the worsening trend of violent extremism,** and the repeated reports of violations of children's and women's rights in Pakistan, which has already led to the blowing up of girls' schools and the flogging of women in parts of the FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It welcomes the widespread condemnation of the attack by large sections of Pakistani society, Islamic scholars and most major political parties, and calls on all political parties to clearly condemn the TTP as the ones who have claimed responsibility for the attack.

The resolution calls on the Commission to develop, jointly with Pakistan, **education programmes aimed at improving the literacy and education of women** in Pakistan as part of its development aid policy. Parliament wants to see a **significant increase in funds** aimed at efforts to protect women and girls from rape, abuse and domestic violence and at measures to enable civil society movements against discrimination of women and girls, noting also that in most cases, the perpetrators of violence against women and girls remain unprosecuted.

Calling on the Commission to act upon its pledge to children in its communication 'A Special Place for Children in the EU External Action', Members insist that women's and children's rights should be **explicitly addressed in all human rights dialogues**. It refers to the issue of eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, in particular forced marriage, domestic violence and feminicide, and insists that the invocation of any custom, tradition or religious consideration of any kind in order to evade the duty to eliminate such brutality should be rejected. The prevention of the practice of child marriage is vital to ensure that the fundamental rights of adolescent girls in Pakistan are respected.

Members call on the competent EU institutions to:

- continue to emphasise the issue of religious tolerance in society in their political dialogue with Pakistan, given that this matter is of central importance to the long-term fight against Islamist extremism;

- insist that the Government of Pakistan uphold the democracy and human rights clause enshrined in the **cooperation agreement** between the European Union and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

The European External Action Service and the EU Special Representative for Human Rights are asked to regularly report on the implementation of the cooperation agreement and the democracy and human rights clause, including the exercise of women's and children's rights.

Members urge the Pakistani authorities to

- prosecute those individuals and groups inciting violence, in particular those calling for the killing of individuals and groups with whom they disagree;

- trace the hundreds, if not thousands, of victims of enforced disappearance in Pakistan, including children, some of them girls as young as nine and ten years old, and to publish the results of internal government investigations into the scale of this problem;

- use the current momentum to make real improvements to women's and girls rights, reviewing and reforming parts of the Hudood Ordinances and the Law of Evidence, the Child Marriage Restraint Act and other pieces of legislation that violate the status and rights of women, making them subordinate in law;

Lastly, Parliament calls on to work closely with the UN and the EU in delivering on the Millennium Development Goals, in particular Goal 2 which states that by 2015 all children, girls and boys, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling, and to make it a priority to increase the number of girls receiving school education and to guarantee their safety while receiving an education.