



Parliament Question

Martyn Day SNP MP for Linlithgow and East Falkirk

1) What assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of child, early and forced marriage in Pakistan in the context of that country's commitment to goal [5.3](#) of the Sustainable Development Goals?

Answered by: James Cleverly

Lord Ahmad discussed the need to promote respect for all religions with Governor of Punjab, Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar, on 28 November 2021. The FCDO funds programmes in Pakistan that directly address commitments made under Sustainable Development Goal 5, to end harmful practices including child and forced marriages. The UK Government has supported the Government of Pakistan in setting up eight child courts to provide child-sensitive justice to children who come in contact with the law, including victims of child abuse, trafficking and child marriage.

2) What assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the recommendations in the [report](#) by the APPG for Pakistani Minorities inquiry on forced conversions and forced marriages of minority girls and women in Pakistan?

Answered: James Cleverly

The UK Government welcomes the publication of the All Party Parliamentary Group's report. Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State for South Asia, [spoke](#) at the launch event. The UK strongly condemns the forced marriage and forced conversion of women and girls in Pakistan. We regularly raise concerns about freedom of religion or belief and women and girls' rights at a senior level with the Government of Pakistan. During his visit to Pakistan on 23 and 24 June 2021, Lord Ahmad met Prime Minister Khan, as well as other senior government ministers, and discussed our concerns.

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Maira Shahbaz Question asked by MP Jim Shannon

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she has made recent representations to the Pakistani Government on the case of [Maira Shahbaz](#)?

Answered by: James Cleverly

It is longstanding Government policy not to comment on individual cases, where to do so may put individuals or their family members in danger. The UK strongly condemns the forced marriage and forced conversion of women and girls in Pakistan. We regularly raise our concerns about Freedom of Religion or Belief, women and girls' rights and gender equality at a senior level with the Government of Pakistan, including on individual cases. During his visit to Pakistan in June 2021, Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State for South Asia met Prime Minister Khan, as well as other senior government ministers including Foreign Minister Qureshi, and Human Rights Minister Mazari. During these meetings, Lord Ahmad highlighted the need to address persecution, promote respect for all religions and increase tolerance for religious minorities. He also met interfaith leaders to understand the situation of minorities in Pakistan, particularly the issue of forced conversion and marriage of young girls. Most recently, Lord Ahmad discussed the need to promote respect for all religions with Governor of Punjab Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar on 28 November, and on January 6 with Shaikh Hasan Haseeb Ur Rehman of the Council of Islamic Ideology, and Pir Naqeeb, custodian of the Eidgah Sharif Shrine in Rawalpindi. In addition to diplomatic engagement, the FCDO funds programmes in Pakistan that directly address early and forced marriages, gender-based violence and modern slavery.

Question asked by Lord Alton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the All Party Parliamentary Group for Pakistani Minorities Abductions, Forced Conversions, and Forced Marriages of Religious Minority Women and Girls in Pakistan, published on 25 November 2021; and what plans they have to implement its recommendations to assist the government Pakistan in (1) collecting comprehensive data to establish the number of (a) abductions, (b) forcible conversions, and (c) forcible marriages, of religious minority women and girls in that country, and (2) reforms to the training of the police and judiciary, including using the training developed by the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute?

Answered by [Lord Ahmed](#) of Wimbledon