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BRIEFING NOTE

Review of Pakistan's GSP+ Status - The Human Rights Violations

Prepared for: The European Union

By: World Sindhi Congress (June 2025)

Purpose of the Dossier

The World Sindhi Congress submits this document to the EU as part of the review of Pakistan's GSP+ status. The dossier presents extensive evidence of Pakistan's failure to uphold the 27 international conventions tied to its GSP+ trade privileges—focusing on grave violations in Sindh affecting environmental justice, land rights, civil liberties, and minority protections.

Key Areas of Violation

1. Environmental Destruction

- **Water Misappropriation:** Six mega-canals, sanctioned under the "Green Pakistan Initiative," divert Indus River water away from Sindh, breaching the 1991 Water Accord. This has triggered:
 - Crop failures, seawater intrusion, and drinking water crises.
 - Ecological collapse of the Indus Delta (shrunk by 92%).
 - Poverty, displacement of communities.
- **Karoonjhar Mountains Mining:** Illegal granite extraction continues despite court bans, causing:
 - Biodiversity loss, water contamination, destruction of historical religious sites, health hazards, loss of livelihood and destruction of communities.
 - Violations of the Convention on Biological Diversity, UNFCCC, and ICESCR.

2. Military Land Grabs

- **Coastal Karachi Displacements:** Army-led DHA attempted to seize 5,000–6,000 acres, risking displacement of 45 fishing villages.

- **Corporate Farming Takeovers:** Over 52,000 acres handed to military-controlled Green Corporate Initiative; 2 million more acres targeted.
- **Haleji Lake Encroachment:** Ramsar-protected wetland under threat from development projects.
- These actions breach ICCPR, ILO, and Ramsar Conventions, and show disregard for Indigenous consent (UNDRIP).

3. Human Rights Violations

Enforced Disappearances & Killings

- At least 500 Sindhi activists abducted since 2019: 55+ still missing.
- High-profile cases include the murder of activist Hidayat Lohar, despite his earlier disappearance and release.
- Government agencies, including intelligence services, are implicated, with no accountability under the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances.
- The amended disappearance bill (2021) discourages complaints and promotes impunity.
- These abuses violate ICCPR, CAT, and the UN Declaration on Enforced Disappearance.

Religious Minority Persecution

- Around 1,000 forced conversions annually; ~300 involve Sindhi Hindu girls.
- Minor victims like Priya Kumari (age 7, still missing) symbolize state failure.
- Widespread misuse of blasphemy laws leads to violence and judicial complicity.
- Pakistan has failed to enact protections despite efforts in Sindh's legislature.
- Breaches include CRC, CEDAW, ICCPR Article 18 (religious freedom).

4. Collapse of Justice and Governance

- **Fatima Phuriro (age 9):** Tortured and raped while working as a domestic servant; accused elite using influence to evade justice.
- **Nazim Jokhio (activist):** Murdered after exposing illegal hunting; politically connected suspects acquitted via out-of-court settlement.
- **Nasrullah Gadani (journalist):** Assassinated; implicated lawmaker remains free.
- **Dr. Shahnawaz Kumbhar:** Killed in police custody after false blasphemy charge.
- All illustrate political immunity and breakdown of due process, violating ICCPR Articles 6 & 14 and UNCAC.

5. Suppression of Freedom of Expression & Assembly

- Peaceful protests (e.g., Voice for Missing Persons of Sindh) are met with arrests and harassment.
- Journalists reporting on state violence are silenced or murdered.
- Digital censorship of Sindhi voices is increasing.
- Violations of ICCPR Articles 19 (expression) and 21 (assembly) are routine.

WSC Recommendations to the EU

1. **Suspend GSP+ Privileges** until Pakistan complies with its international obligations.
2. **Deploy an Independent Fact-Finding Mission** to Sindh.
3. **Hold EU Parliamentary Hearings** on Pakistan's human rights abuses.
4. **Support UN Investigations** and potential international legal action if Pakistan continues impunity for crimes like enforced disappearances.

Conclusion

The WSC urges the EU to uphold its values by acting decisively. Continued GSP+ benefits to Pakistan amid systemic abuses only fuel repression. A firm EU stance could incentivize reforms and offer relief to millions of marginalized Sindhi people.

The World Sindhi Congress (WSC) is a renowned human rights advocacy organization for Sindh and Sindhis, with branches in the UK, USA, Canada, and Sindh. WSC is committed to creating greater awareness within the international community regarding the persecuted status of Sindhis in Pakistan and their struggle for human rights, including the right to self-determination. WSC is a registered non-profit organization in the UK, USA, and Canada. For more information, please visit www.worldsindhicongress.org.