

# PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS & BLASPHEMY LAWS IN PAKISTAN AND NIGERIA

A UN Human Rights Council side event  
11 July 2023, 3:00-4:00 PM  
Room XXV (Palais des Nations)

HON.  
NAZILA GHANEA\*

United Nations Human  
Rights Council Special  
Rapporteur on  
Freedom of Religion  
or Belief



MODERATOR  
GRÉGOR PUPPINCK

Director of the European  
Centre for Law  
and Justice



KOLA ALAPINNI

Nigerian  
International  
Human Rights  
Lawyer



FATIMA NJOKU

Advocacy Manager,  
Stefanos Foundation  
Nigerian Lawyer



HINA & SHAFQAT  
MASIH\*

Mother & Father  
of Shahzad Masih



CECE HEIL

Senior Counsel  
for the American  
Center for Law  
and Justice

SPEAKERS

\* VIA VIDEO



## PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS & BLASPHEMY LAWS IN PAKISTAN AND NIGERIA

### SHAHZAD MASIH

**2017**  
16 YEARS OLD  
WHEN ARRESTED

**2022**  
SENTENCED  
TO DEATH BY  
HANGING  
OVER FALSE  
ACCUSATION  
OF BLASPHEMY

## OBJECTIVE

This event is being convened to highlight the ongoing abuse of blasphemy laws in Pakistan and Nigeria. The event will highlight the case of Shahzad Masih, only a 16-year-old boy when he was arrested, who has now languished in prison for over 5 years and has been sentenced to death over a false blasphemy accusation. The event will also urge the Human Rights Council to initiate an investigative mission to Nigeria to investigate and gather evidence of violence against Christians in Nigeria.

## REQUESTS

- Human Rights Council and the Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN urge Pakistani authorities to expedite the hearing for appeal, overturn the conviction, release Shahzad Masih, and end the abuse of blasphemy laws.
- Human Rights Council initiate an investigative mission to Nigeria's northern and middle belt to investigate and gather evidence of violence against Christians, urge Nigeria to take steps to combat the violence against Christians by militant groups, and urge Nigeria to end the abuse of its blasphemy laws



**ATROCITIES  
LEAVE THOUSANDS  
DEAD IN NIGERIA**