

# Media Update

9 December 2016

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## United Nations

Press Release

### United Nations and Canada Celebrate Freedom with 15-year-old Pakistani award winner

**December 9, 2016: Islamabad,** On the eve of Human Rights Day 2016, the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) and the High Commission of Canada are delighted to recognize Ms. Eiza Abid, a 15-year-old Pakistani girl from Lahore, who has won the international “Celebrating Freedom” poster competition.

In 2015, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Geneva launched a competition in several countries to encourage school-aged children to create a poster on the theme of freedom. Primary (ages 5-11) and secondary (ages 12-18) students from across Pakistan submitted more than 60 entries. These posters were exhibited today at the High Commission of Canada and will be on display for the next two weeks at the UNIC office in Islamabad.

Pakistan’s Eiza Abid won the “Celebrating Freedom” competition in the 12-18 age group. Her artwork uses both dark tones and bright colours to represent freedom of thought. In recognition of her success, she was formally presented today with a certificate signed by Mr. Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

“My painting personifies the darkness and confinement within a person’s life, and once the person is set free from the pressures and judgement of others, one can freely express their thoughts and imagination in their true colors, illustrating their unique vision and bright outlook,” said Ms. Abid.

“Freedom and human rights are core Canadian values,” said Perry Calderwood, High Commissioner of Canada. “Canada played a central role in



drafting the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, through which all nations recognize that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. As we celebrate the creation of that Declaration on Human Rights Day, I am pleased to see Pakistani girls and boys using their talents to promote these same values. I congratulate Ms. Abid and all the participants.”

“Through initiatives like these, we aim to project a positive image of Pakistani youth while providing an opportunity for increasing their knowledge of human rights” said Vittorio Cammarota, Director of the UN Information Centre. “This competition highlights how art can be used as a medium to convey powerful messages and foster a positive change.”

“Celebrating Freedom” is part of a year-long OHCHR campaign to mark the 50th anniversary of two core human rights treaties, the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* and the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*.

This year’s Human Rights Day campaign, “Stand up for someone’s rights today!” is based on the Declaration’s fundamental proposition that every human being – everywhere and at all times – is entitled to the full range of human rights, and that it is the responsibility of all of us to uphold them.

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