



**Joint Statement on Countering Disinformation for promotion and protection of
fundamental rights and freedoms, during General Debate Item 9
54th HRC Session
6th October 2023**

Mr. President,

Pakistan has the honour to deliver this joint statement on behalf of a cross-regional group of states.

Advancements in digital technologies and platforms have transformed the modes through which information and news are exchanged. While offering several benefits, these technologies and platforms have increasingly become conveyor belt of disinformation and hate.

Regardless of its forms, drivers and actors, disinformation is steadily impeding advancement, protection and enjoyment of human rights especially of minorities, women, migrants and refugees. It is fostering societal tensions, undermining public trust in institutions, and undermining respect for rule of law.

With the advent of AI, disinformation is likely to cause even more social harm.

We echo the concerns expressed by UN Secretary General over the ‘grave global harm caused by the proliferation of hate and lies in the digital space’.

We also agree with High Commissioner Turk, “human rights law is clear- freedom of expression stops at hatred that incites discrimination, hostility or violence” and that ‘free speech is not a free pass’.

The growing torrent of disinformation must be countered effectively and immediately in line with international human rights principles, norms and law.

In doing so, we call for responsible exercise of the right to freedom of expression and the duties that are germane to this right. We also underscore the need for enhanced digital literacy. We endorse the call by UN Secretary General for urgent enactment of guardrails to contain the global threat of disinformation and hate.

While recognizing the SG’s proposal on a Code of Conduct for information integrity on digital platforms, we advocate development of a normative framework to effectively counter this growing threat.

We echo the UN Secretary General’s recommendation that technology enterprises must conduct due diligence in relation to the effects of their products, policies, and operations, in line with their responsibilities under the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and



Human Rights, including by conducting human rights impact assessments, involving independent reviewers, and reviewing their business models.

I thank you!

List of 62 Cosponsors:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, China, Comoros, Côte D'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Indonesia, Iran - Islamic Republic of, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, State of Palestine, Sudan, Suriname, Tajikistan, Togo, Tunisia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Yemen, Zimbabwe