

40TH SESSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Remarks by Pakistan for Clustered ID with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of Human Rights Defenders and Special Rapporteur on Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or degrading treatment of punishment

28 February 2019

Mr. President,

Pakistan, being an open progressive democratic country with strong democratic values and institutions, provides for necessary space for human rights defenders to do their work in all fields. This year's theme of the report of the Special Rapporteur on women human rights defenders is particularly important considering that no society can achieve sustainable development and realization of all human rights without engagement and empowerment of women.

2. Women of diverse backgrounds promote and protect rights. We share concerns of the Special Rapporteur regarding various threats faced by women human rights defenders, including public shaming, stigmatization, attacks on honour and reputation, sexual violence etc, which are not acceptable. These threats are particularly more pronounced in digital space and cyber world where attacker is usually anonymous. In this regard, we would ask the Special Rapporteur to share how we can make digital space more secure for women human rights defenders.

Mr. President,

3. We support the point of view of Special Rapporteur on Torture that corruption creates an environment conducive to human rights abuses, including torture and ill-treatment. Our Government has taken a number of measures for strengthening accountability and remedy mechanisms. The Prime Minister's Pakistan Portal has earned worldwide recognition as one of the best performing mobile applications providing quick relief to our citizens. The Ministry of Human Rights has also moved on an Anti-Torture bill, which is now ready to be laid before Parliament.

4. 'Human Dignity' must be respected. We support the international efforts for rehabilitation of victims of torture through our modest contribution to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture. We also regularly report to the Committee Against Torture (CAT) and other international instruments such as ICCPR and ICESCR.

I thankyou Mr. President.