



National Statement, delivered by Mr. Umair Khalid, Third Secretary, at the Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on Situation of Human Rights Defenders at 49th session of Human Rights Council

11 March 2022

Mr. President,

We thank the SR for producing an insightful Report on the converging spheres of human rights defenders and corruption.

As a participatory democracy, Pakistan recognizes the important role of civil society in preventing and combating corruption, in its varied forms and manifestations.

This is evident from the fact that civil society actors were closely consulted during the formulation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy. As a result, this policy document openly declares human rights activists as partners in the fight against this menace.

Pakistan has taken several measures to provide human rights defenders with an enabling and safe environment to carry out their anti-corruption advocacy work.

The enactment of right to information law is illustrative of these measures. Under this law, citizens of Pakistan have the legal right to access records held by public authorities. An Information Commission has also been established to implement this law. The Government has also advanced a draft Bill for protection of whistleblowers.

We are pleased to note that Pakistan has been cited as one of the success stories in the Report. This speaks to the fact that space for anti-corruption advocacy is functional in Pakistan.

Dear Rapporteur, corruption is also a transnational problem. In your views, what role can human rights defenders play in raising global awareness and galvanizing action against secrecy jurisdictions and haven countries, which act as magnets for parking of proceeds of corruption. Thank you.