



National Statement during the Panel Discussion on the tenth anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

29 June 2021

Madam President,

We thank the High Commissioner and panelists for their contributions.

The tenth anniversary of the endorsement of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights is an important landmark. It provides us with an opportunity to share good practices, identify gaps and improve compliance with three key pillars of the Guiding Principles; respect, protect and remedy.

Pakistan is committed to implementing the UN Guiding Principles. We have undertaken a comprehensive multi-stakeholder consultative process in developing Pakistan's first Five-Year National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights. Once adopted, it would focus on human rights due diligence, financial transparency, labour standards & forced labour, occupational health, equality & non-discrimination as well as access to remedy.

Measures to promote and safeguard human rights provide a sound foundation to ensure sustainable socio-economic development and progress. Business enterprises have a crucial role in augmenting State's efforts to achieve SDGs and advance enjoyment of human rights.

Given the contemporary nature of challenges related to business and human rights, we would highlight the following points:

- a) Geographic spread, transboundary nature of operations, huge annual turnover and substantial influence of some Transnational Corporations pose significant challenges especially for developing countries to balance the imperative of attracting foreign direct investment while ensuring implementation of corporate social responsibility, and compliance with human rights norms.
- b) Difference of laws at places of origin and operation of Business enterprises represent another set of challenges related to extraterritorial obligations and protection of human rights. This issue also complicates matters related to amicable settlement of trade and IP related disputes and undermines human rights of individuals in host States.
- c) Subjects related to business enterprises and their obligations which fall under ILO purview are best addressed in receptive domains to avoid duplication.

I thank you.