National statement, delivered by Mr. Afaq Ahmend, Counsellor, during Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights at 48th Session of Human Rights Council

15 September 2021

Madam President,

We thank the Special Rapporteur (SR) for her well-researched report.

Pakistan subscribes to the growing global consensus that UCMs contravene the UN Charter and the international human rights as well as humanitarian laws.

The proliferation of non-UN sanctions regimes is a matter of serious concern for Pakistan. Deployed as a foreign policy tool, these sanction regimes signify a modern form and unlawful use of arbitrary measures against sovereign States.

The imposition of UCMs has no justification or basis under internationally argued rule of law. The pretext of 'advancing human rights in targeted countries' is self-serving and untenable when these measures themselves are fundamentally non-compliant with basic human rights principles, norms and values.

The opaque process and criteria used for designations under these sanctions regimes, coupled with their selective application and absence of due process rights and guarantees for affected individuals and entities, attest to this fact.

We also echo the SR's concerns over the negative humanitarian implications of UCMs, as amplified by the COVID pandemic.

Regrettably, targeted countries have struggled to secure, in a timely manner, COVID vaccines, medicines, medical equipments, food and other essential items during the global health emergency. The affected countries need international support in recovering better and stronger from the pandemic since their economies have long suffered from the debilitating impacts of UCMs.

Madam President, Pakistan fully supports the SR's call that in the wider context, the global community should invest more in peaceful settlement of differences and disputes, with a view to strengthening rule of law and human rights globally. I thank you.