



**National Statement, delivered by Mr. Danyal Hasnain, Third Secretary, during the  
Interactive Dialogue with Working Group on Arbitrary Detention  
54<sup>th</sup> HRC Session  
18 September 2023**

Mr. President,

We thank the Working Group for the report and appreciate its thematic focus.

We have consistently engaged with the Working Group in a constructive manner and attach high importance to its mandate.

We agree with the Working Group that States ought to balance the imperative of responding to public health emergencies while upholding human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.

We note the Working Group's finding that increasingly states are adopting laws to check spread of disinformation but this increases the likelihood of arbitrary detentions on fake news.

While recognizing these valid observations, we would like to highlight that persons under occupation and minorities are at a heightened level of disadvantage when it comes to absence of due process of law.

Minorities can be stigmatized during health emergencies creating pressures for local authorities to act impulsively.

Using disinformation at a time of crises such as a public health emergency is often motivated by racial and xenophobic factors that often pervade judicial and law enforcement institutions.

In this context, the working group should consider and suggest tools that can be used to avoid hate-based factors in generating a law enforcement response to such detentions.

We hope the recommendations of the Working Group are implemented by these States and that this report helps sharpen the emphasis on situations of gross and systematic human rights violations.

I thank you!