



Press Release

We have seen the OHCHR's press statement of 15 November 2023 regarding the Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan of the Government of Pakistan. Pakistan has the highest regard and respect for the OHCHR. However, the OHCHR'S statement lacks context and makes a number of unsubstantiated assertions. The Government of Pakistan would like to set the record straight.

One, the Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan applies to all foreigners, irrespective of their nationality or country of origin, residing in Pakistan in violation of our domestic laws. The Plan is consistent with international law and practice, and an exercise of Pakistan's sovereign right to regulate its borders. Indeed, Pakistan is only attempting to do what other countries practice as a matter of routine.

Two, Pakistan takes its human rights and humanitarian obligations and commitments seriously. For instance, no country can match the generosity with which Pakistan has hosted over 4 million Afghan nationals in full honour and dignity for the last 40+ years, bearing this burden almost entirely on its own. Many of these Afghan nationals as well as nationals of other countries in Pakistan have no documentation and are therefore illegal aliens.

Three, we have put in place effective institutional mechanisms to ensure effective and smooth repatriation of illegal foreigners in a dignified manner. Measures have been instituted to address instances of harassment and maltreatment during the implementation of the repatriation plan.

Four, the Government is fully sensitive to the concerns expressed about the return of people in a vulnerable situation, and remains engaged with international partners in this regard.

Five, we re-emphasize the need to prioritize the effective implementation of durable solutions to address conditions which lead to the displacement of populations. Pakistan will continue to work closely with the international community in advancing this shared objective.

Finally, we expect that the UN Human Rights Office would exercise due diligence and discernment when addressing such complex situations and demonstrate objectivity and impartiality while pronouncing on these.

16 November 2023

Geneva