

41st SESSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Remarks by Pakistan for Clustered Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Health and Special Rapporteur on Leprosy

24 June 2019

Mr. President,

We thank both the Special Rapporteurs for their insightful reports and presentations.

2. The Special Rapporteur (SR) on Health has rightly pointed out that good mental health and well-being cannot be defined by the absence of a mental health condition, but rather must be defined by the social, psychosocial, political, economic and physical environment that enables individuals and populations to live a life of dignity, with full enjoyment of their rights and in the equitable pursuit of their potential.

3. Pakistan is cognizant of its obligations for realizing the rights to health of all its citizens. In addition to dedicated government efforts, the traditional family system provides an enabling environment and close social connection throughout the life of the individuals.

4. Pakistan revised its mental health policy in 2003 to bring it in line with the latest standards. A comprehensive mental health legislation is in place since 2001. Pakistan Association for Mental Health (PAMH), declared January 2019 as a month to raise awareness about mental health and organized a series of free seminars on stress and anger management, mental illness, parenting and emotional regulation, child mental health and child abuse.

Mr. President,

5. Pakistan agrees with Special Rapporteur on Leprosy in concluding that it is important to recognize that all human rights are inalienable, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated and that they all must be fulfilled on a non-discriminatory basis, alongside a multisectoral strategy.

6. This mandate gives us an opportunity to address the widespread, institutionalized and structural discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members.

7. Pakistan has combated this terrible affliction and our vibrant civil society has partnered with the Government in this endeavour. The WHO declared leprosy to be under control in Pakistan in 1996, ahead of most other Asian countries.

8. We request the Special Rapporteur to elaborate as to how international cooperation can help eliminate discrimination and stigmatization of persons affected by leprosy.

I thank you.
