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42nd SESSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

**Remarks by Pakistan for Clustered ID with Special Rapporteur on
Contemporary forms of Slavery and Working Group on Use of
Mercenaries**

09 September 2019

Mr. President,

Let me begin by thanking the Special Rapporteur and the Working Group for their comprehensive and informative presentations.

Pakistan agrees with the Special Rapporteur's observations that among others, inequality, demographic pressure, climate change and absence of safe and affordable pathways of labour migration increase risks of people falling prey to this heinous crime.

Unfortunately, modern technologies have also facilitated new forms of online exploitation, especially targeting children and women.

Pakistan's Constitution categorically prohibits all forms of bonded labour. As a signatory to ILO Forced Labor Convention, we have also taken numerous measures to eliminate this menace.

In June 2018, we enacted two new domestic legislations on migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons so as to effectively tackle the emerging linkages between irregular movement and different forms of modern slavery.

Pakistan fully endorses Special Rapporteur's advocacy for a multi-stakeholder, multi-faceted victim-centric approach to grapple with this challenge.

We should equitably address both national and trans-national drivers of modern slavery, with a special and dedicated focus on addressing widening global inequalities and increasing legal routes for labour migration.

Mr. President,

The increasing role of mercenaries in different settings, including in extractive industries as elaborated in the Working Group's report, underlines the need to evolve an international legal framework to regulate them.

We would like to emphasize that in its future work-plan, the Working Group should focus on its primary mandate i.e. the direct impact of use of mercenaries for impeding the exercise of right of self-determination.

This is all the more important when people living under the yoke of foreign occupation around the globe, including in our neighbourhood, are being brutally suppressed through indiscriminate use of force.

Thank you.
