



Please check against delivery

Statement by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi
during Interactive Dialogue with the High Commissioner on her Report
“Central role of the State in responding to pandemics and other health
emergencies, and the socioeconomic consequences thereof, in advancing
sustainable development and the realization of all human rights”

21 June 2021

Madam President,

We thank the High Commissioner for her detailed report which includes needs assessment and calls for urgent human rights interventions across several areas.

The report’s diagnosis of the systemic drivers of socio-economic inequalities i.e. triggered by the 2008 global economic downturn and exacerbated by wide ranging impacts of COVID -19 pandemic is president. The cumulative social and economic consequences of COVID-19 especially on developing countries (over 100 million people pushed into poverty, loss of nearly 250 million jobs, over 60 % loss of income for informal workers) are both disproportionate and not of their making.

We agree that radical measures are needed to support countries in debt distress and severe fiscal limitations due to the pandemic, to protect rights and to achieve SDGs. Despite economic constraints, Pakistan rolled out robust social protection, public health and fiscal stimulus measures to save lives and livelihoods. We shared detailed information on COVID response pursuant to HRC resolution 44/2.

We share the assessment that lack of investment in economic, social and cultural rights has left societies insufficiently prepared for the pandemic. Recovering from COVID effects and building back better requires integrated development and human rights-based responses. We therefore echo several recommendations advanced by the High Commissioner especially mobilization of international development finance, effective implementation of TRIPS Agreement and debt relief.

We endorse the call for renewed political will, leadership and fulfillment of commitments under the 2030 Agenda. Meaningful preparations and responses to the global health emergencies necessitate cooperative multilateral actions.

We further reiterate the imperative of early, equitable and affordable access to COVID vaccines and medicines. This can only happen if production of vaccines, diagnostics and medicines is ramped up and undue patents and controls are lifted sooner than later. Beyond mitigation of COVID-induced health impacts, mobilization of global financial resources is essential in support of developing countries efforts both to make up for loss of development gains and to achieve progress towards realization of the 2030 Agenda. **I thank you.**