



**Statement, delivered on behalf of Like-Minded Group of Countries by
Ambassador Tahir Hussain Andrabi, Deputy Permanent Representative to the
UN, during General Debate under agenda item 10 at the 46th session of Human
Rights Council
22 March 2021**

Madam President,

Pakistan is delivering this statement on behalf of Like-Minded Group of countries. The list of co-sponsors will be posted on the Extranet.

The Council's technical assistance mandate should complement States' domestic human rights efforts. The central principle of securing consent of and consulting with concerned States is enshrined in UNGA resolution 60/251.

Further, resolution 60/251 clearly pronounces that all basic human rights are equal, indivisible, inter-related and inter-dependent.

Unfortunately, these well-established principles are being set aside. Technical assistance is packaged in such a way that it creates hierarchy among human rights, and often serves as a pretext for interference into domestic affairs of sovereign States. In certain cases, countries have been pushed to accept technical assistance.

These disconcerting trend-lines have hampered cooperation and genuine dialogue. They must be reversed.

Madam President,

Socio-economic development and human rights are organically inter-linked and mutually reinforcing. Poverty alleviation and reduction of structural inequalities within and among countries ultimately strengthen human rights protection.

The unprecedented disruption caused by the COVID crisis has further brought home this fact. The deadly virus has contracted economies, stretched health systems, and tested resilience of social protection coverage. The contagion has put at heightened risk individuals' fundamental rights to life, livelihood, health, and development, among other basic rights.

We invite special attention towards the peculiar situation of developing countries, which have been disproportionately affected by health and socio-economic consequences of the pandemic, including those subjected to unjustified obstacles.

This shifting global human rights landscape calls for effective use of the Council's technical assistance mandate in support of developing countries' efforts to mitigate the wide-



ranging impacts of the COVID pandemic, and build back better and stronger against future shocks and health emergencies to ensure that no one is left behind.

More importantly, with a view to upholding basic rights of everyone to life and health everywhere, the Council and human rights mechanisms should continue to call for timely, universal, affordable and equitable access to COVID vaccines and other health products.

Madam President,

Technical assistance should also be used to support States upon their request in implementing the recommendations agreed by them during the UPR process, as well as in fulfilling their international human rights obligations.

I thank you.

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