



**Statement by Permanent Representative of Pakistan at the
WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY 74th Session (virtual)
(Wednesday, 26 May 2021)**

“Health conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan” (Agenda item 25)

Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan is gravely concerned over the magnitude of deteriorating health condition in the occupied Palestine territories including East Jerusalem, Gaza and in the occupied Syrian Golan. These appalling health conditions have been exacerbated by the latest spate of Israeli aggression targeting homes, hospitals, ambulances with hundreds of casualties, putting strains on already precarious health facilities.

The Director General’s comprehensive report in document A74/22 corroborates these grave health problems. As mentioned in the report, all aspects of life, encompassing underlying determinants of health, have been profoundly affected by the chronic occupation and situations of long-term displacement and blockade.

Forced restrictions on the movement of health workers, ambulances and patients as well as hurdles in import approvals for essential medical supplies exist as a pattern in the occupied Palestinian territories. The raging COVID-19 pandemic is an added constraint, affecting the ability of the Palestinian health system to reach communities for provision of timely health services and coordination of the public health response.

A matter of equally serious concern is the high level of exposure to violence that is responsible for increased mental health and psychosocial traumas. The Director General’s report A74/22 estimates that more than half a million people are in need of mental health and psychosocial support services due to experience of distress and mental ill health.

Mr. Chairman,

We appreciate the WHO’s technical assistance and support to the public health needs and immediate response to the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic to the people in the occupied Palestinian territories. WHO’s technical assistance as well as support to the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA) must keep pace with



deteriorating health conditions and emerging challenges due to cyclic violence and persistent occupation.

The Director General's report is also alarmed at rising levels of poverty, food insecurity and unemployment in the occupied Palestinian territory. This calls for an end to economic and political repression that jeopardize access to essential health services and humanitarian assistance to the people in the occupied territories.

Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan delegation lends its full support to the decision presented under agenda item 25. We strongly urge the international community to uphold international humanitarian and human rights laws including the right to health of the Palestinian people as well as equitable access to COVID vaccines.

Thank you
