



**National Statement delivered by Mr. Afaq Ahmad, Counsellor, during
the 24th Session of the Working Group on the Right to Development**

15 May 2023

Mr. Chairperson,

We align our position with NAM and OIC statements.

We congratulate you on your reelection as the Chair-Rapporteur and appreciate your leadership of this important mechanism.

We also commend the valuable work of the drafting Committee and the support provided by the Office of the High Commissioner.

We reiterate the organic linkage between the mutually reinforcing dimensions of the right to development and other human rights. After years of deliberations, the Working Group has reached an important juncture. Despite divergences, text-based negotiations and revised draft text represent a major breakthrough as it encapsulates key elements that remain pivotal for promoting sustained development and operationalizing the right to development.

Once finalized, agreed and adopted, the legally binding instrument would bring the right to development at par with the normative framework on other human rights including civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. It would also contribute in strengthening the rules-based international economic and financial order.

Mr. Chairperson,

The revised draft text aptly contextualizes all relevant aspects of the right to development, incorporates the essence of important universal principles, outlines pathways to overcome challenges and emphasizes the significant role of international cooperation. The text before the Working Group is also in line with principles enshrined in international human rights law including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Declaration on the Right to Development, ICCPR, ICESCR and Addis Ababa Action Agenda. We welcome the integration of key factors and drivers of sustainable development into the revised text.

On the eve of the 75th anniversary of the UDHR, we need to reaffirm our commitment for making this planet a better place for all human beings and ensure better standards of life and social progress. We have to honour our pledges by going beyond the rhetoric.

Mr. Chairperson,



As we are engaged in discussions, the global socio-economic landscape presents a sobering picture with growing inequalities between and among states and erosion of decades of development gains as a result of financial crunch, climate change, natural calamities and conflicts. Unfortunately, persistent lack of political will and commitment to mobilize resources are impeding global progress towards sustained economic recovery with severe consequences for the developing and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Reduced fiscal space, growing debt burdens and liquidity crunch, have undermined efforts to alleviate extreme poverty, provide decent work and ensure access to health and education.

Mr. Chairperson,

The path to economic recovery and achievement of SDGs is indeed difficult and long. Yet it is achievable given demonstration of requisite commitment. It requires transformational actions and political will to deal with these systemic challenges through greater cooperation, transparency in international financial order and by fulfilling commitments on financing for development.

We encourage everyone to redouble engagement in the process of negotiations on the draft Convention.

We stand ready to do our part.

I thank you.