



Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN

Geneva

National statement, delivered by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi, Pakistan Permanent Representative to the UN, during Interactive Dialogue with Working Group on discrimination against women and girls at the 44th session of the Human Rights Council

(6 July 2020)

Madam President,

We thank the Working Group for its thematic report and insights.

Pakistan's commitment and adherence to the ideals of equality and empowerment of women stems from our faith, our constitution and the vision of our founding fathers. We are fully committed to realizing these objectives.

Pakistan has taken cross-sectoral steps aimed at eliminating gender inequalities and empowerment of women. To ensure women's equal participation in the work force, the government has instituted laws and policies to remove barriers, such as harassment at work place and gender-based violence; and through affirmative actions like provision of day-care centers and enhanced access to education.

Pakistan Vision-2025 prioritizes women empowerment; gender mainstreaming at all levels of governance structure. [Key reform areas include: (i) institutional restructuring (ii) policies and fiscal reforms (iii) women employment in public sector and (iv) women's political participation.]

To complement these measures, the Government has made education for children up to 16 years of age, free and compulsory. Special attention is being paid to the enrollment and retention of girls in schools. Financial support and other incentives have been put in place for this purpose. Prior to and during the ongoing pandemic, we have instituted social protection measures for 12 million beneficiaries through unconditional cash transfers spread across four categories, and over 50% of the beneficiaries are women. To ensure equal employment opportunities for women, other steps taken by Pakistan include:

- i. Increase in the duration of paid maternity leave from 84 to 112 days;
- ii. 60 reserved seats for women in the Parliament, in addition to general seats;
- iii. 21% to 33% reserved seats for women in provincial assemblies;
- iv. 50% quota for young female entrepreneurs (age group of 21 – 45 years) in the Prime Minister's Youth Business Loan (set up in 2013)



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- v. Adoption of Day Care Centers Bill by the National Assembly of Pakistan (2019)

We request the working group to share its views on ways and means to increasing representation of women in senior management positions.

I thank you.