



Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN

Geneva

National statement, delivered by Ambassador Tahir Hussain Andrabi, Deputy Permanent Representative, during Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on Human Rights of Migrants at the 44th session of the Human Rights Council

(6 July 2020)

Madam President,

We thank the Special Rapporteur (SR) for the report.

As a country of origin, transit and destination, Pakistan recognizes and values the promise of migration.

We continue to host, on an average, more than a million irregular migrants from neighbouring countries and the region for over four decades. They have enjoyed social mobility, employment opportunities and access to health and education. Our national response to COVID was inclusive, providing equal access of health facilities to the migrants in our country. We have mainstreamed the protection of human rights in our management of migrants. An extensive exercise of registration of undocumented Afghans in recent years provided identity to around 880,000 Afghan nationals enabling increased protection of their rights.

Like other vulnerable groups migrants have been severely hit due to COVID-19 pandemic. Their political and economic rights are imperilled. We urge the SR to examine the impact of pandemic on the economic rights of migrants.

Inclusive policies aimed at empowering the migrants need to be fostered including employment pathways and societal acceptance.

Madam President,

The SR has extensively discussed the migrants' rights to freedom of association in the context of peculiar vulnerabilities faced by them. The limitation on the freedom of association of migrants must be proportionate and in accordance with the principle of legality and serve a legitimate public purpose.

What in SR's view, could be the required policy measures to counter the toxic narratives towards migrants and how to protect them from the brunt of incendiary rhetoric scapegoating them for narrow political gains.

I thank you.