



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 Right to Education at the 44th session of the Human Rights Council

(3 July 2020)

Madam President,

We thank the Special Rapporteur for her report.

We agree with the Special Rapporteur that COVID-19 pandemic has had numerous implications in all sectors of human life, leading to an economic crisis, as well as an education crisis. The financial crunch caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected the poor and most vulnerable segments of the society. These include small business owners as well as some low-cost schools.

Pakistan remains mindful of the safety and well-being of the children in the COVID-19 pandemic, The Government is therefore adopting a balanced lockdown to ensure online learning and adjusting summer vacations with temporary closure of the schools. At the same time, the private low-income schools will be insulated from the impacts of the pandemic as part of government's measures to protect small business enterprises from economic impacts of COVID-19.

The incumbent Government has prioritized access to education for all children in Pakistan. 'National Education Policy Framework 2018' laid down a uniform system of education, uniform syllabus, standardized education services to ensure common standards of teaching and learning, and multi-language proficiency. It also envisaged plans to increase enrollment of girls and reduce drop-out ratio.

We agree with the Special Rapporteur that because of the financial crunch caused by the pandemic, a significant reduction in the public education budgets is likely. We request her to elaborate, what in her view could be innovative solutions and avenues of international cooperation that would help the developing countries avoid such measures and ensure continued access to education for all children.

I thank you.