



Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN **Geneva**

44TH SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Draft Resolution A/HRC/44/L.21.Rev.1

Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls

Explanation of Vote before the Vote by Pakistan

(16 July 2020)

Madam President,

Pakistan's strong commitment to upholding & safeguarding the rights of women including elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls is manifested in comprehensive legal framework, cross-sectoral policies and implementation measures.

Pakistan greatly values Council's deliberations and work to advance ways of eliminating discrimination against women and girls. We are grateful to the delegation of Mexico for keeping this discussion on the agenda of the Council and for its engagement with all stakeholders.

However, we regret that several concerns, raised by a number of delegations during informal consultations, have still not been addressed in the text before us. Some references in the resolution to comprehensive sexuality education, which we believe, like many other terms, have not been agreed by all States. These themes must be interpreted in the context of relevant national laws and cultural settings.

We also wish to clarify that women and girls' equality, particularly in the context of "equal" access to health-care services, autonomy, including bodily autonomy, among other things, is not in line with States' obligations under international human rights law, including Convention on the Rights of the Child and respect for parental rights.

While we share the view that attaining the highest standard of health, in all its dimensions, is critical to the realization of the human rights of women and girls, we regret that the language included in the resolution wrongly implies an understanding of "sexual and reproductive health" and "reproductive rights" as standalone "human rights" in PP11 and OP7.

We reiterate that references to abortion, sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights should conform to the agreed provisions of the Beijing Declaration and Programme of Action and International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). We underline that sexual and reproductive health is not a standalone human right but an integral part of “right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health”.

Considering that these references do not enjoy universal agreement, Pakistan supported the amendments, disassociates itself from their incorporation into the resolution, in particular in PP-11, OP-4(e), OP-7 and OP-9.

I request you Madam President to make this explanation of vote a part of the Council’s official record.

I thank you.