



Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN

Geneva

Draft Resolution A/HRC/44/L.23 Rev.1

The central role of the State in responding to pandemics and other health emergencies, and the socioeconomic consequences thereof in advancing sustainable development and the realization of all human rights

General Comments by Pakistan

44th Session of the Human Rights Council

(16 July 2020)

Madam President,

Rights and needs of all human beings are intrinsically inter-linked and mutually reinforcing. The health, social and economic impacts arising from COVID-19 outbreak are unprecedented and far reaching. The pandemic has also exacerbated existing inequalities, shaken the well-resourced health systems and upended the already fragile global economic recovery.

There is a growing body of research that points to the loss of decades of development gains due to the effects of this deadly virus. The slow progress towards the realization of SDGs has been further set back due to the on-set of COVID-19.

Survey after survey has highlighted that the pandemic will hinder global economic growth by 5-6 per cent this year, and accordingly reduce fiscal space of all states in varying degrees, but particularly a large number of developing countries.

These developments provide the back-drop to the draft resolution before this Council and a global right-based policy response to the health crisis and an unparalleled socio-economic challenge of our times.

The draft resolution is an initiative that advocates the central role of the state in responding to pandemics, other health emergencies and calls for building capacities to promote sustainable development and help in the enjoyment and realization of all human rights.



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As this devastating pandemic has demonstrated, building states' capacities is essential to realizing the right of everyone to health and to shape responses that ensure equitable and affordable access to health technologies, including medicines and vaccines, for everyone, everywhere. These capacities and responses require adequate liquidity, fiscal space, debt relief and technical assistance as key enablers for public health emergency and pandemic responses by states.

As COVID-19-related diagnostics, therapeutics, medicines and vaccines go through various stages of development, manufacturing and distribution, we must ensure faithful adherence to the principles of equity, fairness and consideration to the special circumstances of people and countries in most need. It would require a solid commitment and concrete actions to ensure that no individual or country is left behind.

We hope the High Commissioner's need assessment of the technical assistance and capacity building aspect would outline pathways that assist in strengthening the central role of the state in shaping effective responses to health and socio-economic effects arising from the pandemic. We look forward to greater clarity on how to facilitate the means of implementation, especially financing for development to advance the SDGs, and help realize human rights for all.

Finally, we are grateful to all states that have supported this initiative and urge the Council to adopt this resolution by consensus.

I thank you.