



## Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN Geneva

### **Statement, delivered on behalf of OIC by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi, Pakistan Permanent Representative to the UN, during General Debate under Agenda Item 8: Follow-up to and implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action at the 45<sup>th</sup> session of Human Rights Council**

**(01 October 2020)**

Madam President,

Since its adoption 27 years ago, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (VDPA) continue to guide the international community in effectively advancing the global human rights agenda.

VDPA's prominent focus on socio-economic advancement as bedrock for enjoyment of other basic rights; combating xenophobia, discrimination and intolerance; and protecting and promoting fundamental rights of refugees, migrants, and minorities, as well as those suffering under situations of foreign occupation, resonates with contemporary human rights challenges.

Madam President,

Given the devastating socio-economic impacts of COVID pandemic, the OIC calls for full consideration of its impacts on lives, health, and livelihoods in developing and least developed countries.

In this context, the OIC strongly echoes VDPA's call on the international community to help these countries in their national efforts to alleviate poverty, promote social inclusion, ease their debt burden and remove global barriers to equitable development.

Madam President,

The alarming rise in contempt, hatred, hostility and violence against individuals and groups, on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity and nationality, is a matter of grave concern for the OIC countries.

The sharp spike in long-standing Islamophobia, amidst the global health emergency, is disconcerting, which is being fed through populist rhetoric, and amplified through misuse of social media platforms.

Under the garb of COVID responses, Muslim minorities, living in different parts of the world, have been stigmatized, discriminated against and persecuted.

Equally disturbing has been the closing of borders by some countries to migrant workers and refugees on the basis of origin, sex, race or religion.

Madam President,



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People living under foreign occupation and alien or colonial domination continue to be denied their inalienable right to self-determination, and as a result, have been subjected to grave, systematic human rights violations at the hands of occupying powers.

As endorsed by VDPA, effective legal protection should be provided to such people against the violation of their basic human rights while fully supporting their right to take any legitimate action, in accordance with the UN Charter, to realize their right to self-determination.

Madam President,

In view of these multi-dimensional human rights challenges, the OIC urges the international community to reinvigorate the "Vienna Spirit" and take effective and coordinated steps for the full implementation of VDPA.

Thank you.