



# PAKISTAN

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Statement

By

**Ambassador Farukh Amil  
Acting Permanent Representative  
of Pakistan**

**under agenda item 64:**

**“Promotion and Protection of Human Rights”**

**at the Third Committee of the 63<sup>rd</sup> session  
of the United Nations General Assembly**

**New York  
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**Statement by Ambassador Farukh Amil, Acting Permanent  
Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations**

**Under agenda item 64 "Promotion and Protection of  
Human Rights"**

Mr. Chairperson

This year marks the sixtieth anniversary of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Since the declaration sixty years ago, the international community has come a long way on evolving normative and institutional framework for promotion and protection of human rights. The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (VDPA) established the normative bridge between the UDHR and all other human rights instruments.

While the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirmed "inherent dignity" and "equal and inalienable rights" of all members of the human family to be the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world, the central message of Vienna conference placed human person as the central subject of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

During the course of last week we have listened to different Special Rapporteurs. The dialogue with them provided us a beneficial opportunity in the Third committee to listen to the views and work done by the Special Rapporteurs within their respective mandates. It is worthwhile to note that many reports on country visits have been presented in a selective approach. There is also failure to discuss the criteria on the basis of which countries are selected for these visits. Ironically, quite often, the countries selected for invitation to the Special Rapporteurs happens to be only the developing countries. The Special Rapporteurs have the challenging task of trying to do justice to all aspects of their mandates envisaging that human rights are universal, indivisible, and interdependent and interrelated. Their role remains vital for promotion and protection of international human rights. As a result their visits should also comprise of all parts of the world.

Mr. Chairperson

The international human rights instruments cover almost all relevant areas of human rights, however, there are emerging challenges and issues which need to be addressed by the international human rights law. It can not remain frozen in time. The growing trends of racism, racial and religious discrimination including xenophobic tendencies are threatening the multi-cultural fabric of many of our

societies. Rights must be exercised with responsibilities. The challenge of defamation of religions cannot merely be seen through a political lens alone. Defamation is a creeping incremental malady that over a period of time vilifies an entire religion and its followers, and as the world has already too often witnessed, ends up in horrors of religious and racial profiling set against a backdrop of fear and hate. How many times have we heard "never again". There is a need to address the excess being committed in the name of freedom of expression and opinion and arrive at a consensus, how we can jointly tackle this phenomenon.

Mr. Chairperson

The objective of the international human rights frame work remains to emphasize and ensure that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights". It underlines the correlation between civil and political rights on the one hand and the economic, social and cultural rights on the other. We must give equal attention to economic and social as well as political rights.

The important question remains the level of success achieved by international community in implementing the human rights instruments and securing the human rights of all regardless of race, religion, sex, nationality or economic class. Indeed the answer would depend upon which side of the human rights spectrum one is based in. Without moving into the domain of judgement, the successful implementation of human rights instruments essentially remains a work in progress. It will remain so while one-third of the humanity lives in abject poverty. Thousands of people in our world die each day from hunger, poverty, and preventable diseases. Poverty alleviation should become the central theme of the human rights machinery. The freedom to live in dignity cannot be realized unless the majority of the population is able to enjoy the benefits of globalization which have been primarily limited to a privileged few.

Mr. Chairperson

The implementation of international human rights instruments will remain a work in progress until millions of people keep on suffering brutal conflicts that rage across the world, especially in the poorest countries - sparked and sustained by the politics of scarcity, greed and exploitation. Millions continue to suffer under the heel of foreign occupation, and are denied the fundamental freedom encompassed in the Charter and in the first article in both the two International Covenants - the right to self-determination.

Mr. Chairperson

The sixtieth anniversary of UDHR is also a time for national introspection.

Pakistan's Constitution is built on the principle of equal rights and equal treatment of all citizens and persons without any distinction. It guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms, including social, economic and political justice, freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship and association. It directs the state to take appropriate measures to enable women to participate in all spheres of life and community activities, and safeguard the rights and interests of the minorities.

The vision of the recently elected democratic government in Pakistan is consistent with the aspirations of the our Constitution and desire of our people for a modern, moderate and democratic polity that would uphold all human rights and foster respect especially for the rights of women, children and minorities.

Mr. Chairperson

Pakistan is a State party to several human rights instruments including those covering elimination of racial discrimination, elimination of discrimination against women, rights of the child, minimum age for employment, elimination of the worst form of child labour, and combating trafficking of women and girls.

More recently, we have ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and signed: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities during this year.

Pakistan has a separate Ministry of Human Rights which monitors and addresses human rights violations and trends, with special reference to women, minorities and vulnerable segments of society. A vibrant civil society is playing a key role in fostering a culture of accountability and transparency in the formulation and implementation of policies on human rights and assisting in changing societal attitudes.

Earlier this month, the federal Cabinet has approved the draft bill for the Establishment of National Commission on Human Rights (NCHR). The NCHR will be in accordance with the Paris Principles and would not only help in combating human rights violations but also fulfil international obligations.

Pakistan is among the first countries to undergo the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) at the Human Rights Council. The preparation for UPR acted as a catalyst for effective national dialogue on human rights within the relevant government departments and with civil society. It also helped us create more awareness about the promotion and protection of human rights.

Mr. Chairperson

While Pakistan was negotiating its transition to democracy, Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto became a victim of a cowardly and barbaric act of terrorism by the forces of evil against the forces of democracy and moderation in Pakistan. All her life, Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto upheld human rights and struggled against the forces of extremism and terrorism. She had once remarked that "there was nothing more un-Islamic than discrimination". While there are many complex challenges ahead, the recently democratically elected government in Pakistan is determined to pursue her legacy of tolerance, respect and moderation, and translate these into an ethos and a popular culture for the promotion and protection of human rights in all spheres of life.

I thank you Mr Chairperson.

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