



**Opening Remarks by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi at the adoption of Pakistan's 4<sup>th</sup> UPR  
Review Report  
53<sup>rd</sup> HRC Session  
10 July 2023**

**Madam Vice President,  
Members of the Troika,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,**

I have the honor to make these opening remarks, on behalf of Pakistan delegation, at the adoption of the report of our 4<sup>th</sup> Universal Periodic Review held on 30th January this year.

Let me begin by thanking all member states for their active participation in our 4<sup>th</sup> review.

We appreciate the observations and recommendations made by 122 States, who took the floor and the 11 States that sent their advance questions. We also thank the UN entities and civil society organisations for their feedback.

I wish to recognize Pakistan's several human rights groups and civil society organizations who virtually followed the proceedings. We are immensely pleased to see a growing interest in Pakistan in the UPR process. We consider this another marker on the journey to further respect and protection of human rights for all in Pakistan.

We also thank the Troika members - Nepal, Argentina, and The Gambia, as well as the HRC Secretariat in facilitating the UPR process and their efforts in preparing our report.

**Madam Vice President,**

Pakistan accords high importance to the UPR process as a productive mechanism of this Council that enables States to meet their human rights obligations through constructive engagement and in a largely non-politicized manner.

We reaffirm our support to UPR process and will continue our constructive engagement.

**Madam Vice President,**

Pakistan's human rights profile has remained on an upward trajectory through the four cycles of the UPR process.



The 4<sup>th</sup> review afforded us an opportunity to showcase the progress being made as also the challenges faced in our abiding quest to advance rights, freedoms, dignity and better standards of life for everyone in the country.

Our National Report was drafted through extensive consultations with several Ministries and Departments of the Government of Pakistan and other stakeholders, including the National Human Rights Institutions, non-governmental organizations, civil society groups, academia, and other experts. These consultations included wide-ranging perspectives and diverse views towards the overall human rights initiatives, in general, and the implementation process of the previous UPR recommendations.

In line with the spirit of constructive engagement and exchange of views, we also participated in a pre-UPR session organized by the civil society groups here in Geneva.

Pakistan's inter-ministerial delegation was headed by Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and included Senator Walid Iqbal, Chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights, Mr. Ali Raza Bhutta, Secretary Ministry of Human Rights, and other senior officials from different Ministries.

The delegation while appreciating the comments, observations and recommendations and provided its perspective and feedback.

In the past months, the 340 recommendations from member states were thoroughly examined by a multi-stakeholder consultative mechanism.

In line with our human rights obligations and constitutional as well as the legal framework, I am pleased to report that we have accepted around 70% of the 340 recommendations (which totals 253), noted 84, and rejected the 3 politically motivated assertions.

I am also pleased to note that this acceptance rate marks a significant increase compared with our 3<sup>rd</sup> UPR when we accepted around 50% of the recommendations.

We have paid particular attention to the rights of women, and children, education, health, among others. These are already a priority for the government, and our action on these recommendations will be a continued follow-up to our existing and upcoming initiatives.

We are also mindful of the recommendations made in other areas, such as minorities, media, and law enforcement. We have viewed them on merit and these will remain part of our overall human rights agenda in the days ahead.



While we attach great importance to all the recommendations received, we were unable to accept some of the recommendations pertaining to certain areas due to our legal and jurisprudence related limitations. Nonetheless, we are pleased to accept a great majority of recommendations aimed at furthering respect and protections for all our people, especially in the field of economic, social and cultural rights.

As we passed through four cycles of the UPR, our domestic legal architecture at the federal and provincial levels finds itself more and more in harmony with our obligations pursuant to international human rights treaties to which we are a party.

We recognize the need for more work, especially in implementing and strengthening the institutional mechanisms.

Let me stop here. I will be happy to speak briefly again later. Thank you.

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**Closing Remarks by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi after the adoption of Pakistan's 4<sup>th</sup>  
UPR Review Report  
53<sup>rd</sup> HRC session  
10 July 2023**

**Madam Vice President,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,**

On behalf of Pakistan delegation, I would like to thank everyone for the encouraging comments and for endorsing the unanimous adoption of our report.

We would also like to thank the civil society organizations for their participation. We have duly noted their observations and comments.

In response to some of the comments made, let me highlight some of the areas of our active work in the field of human rights.

During our January review, we highlighted that human rights lay deep in the foundations of Pakistan's nationhood. In line with the **constitutional framework**, the democratic governance structures, as protectors and duty bearers, have grown from strength to strength. This is visible through an independent judiciary, robust parliamentary traditions, free media and an active civil society.

Pakistan has consistently demonstrated its **strong political will** to promote and protect all human rights of everyone. This is manifest in the wide-ranging legislative, policy, and institutional steps taken across the spectrum of civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights.

Pakistan has enacted **several progressive legislations** in line with its international human rights obligations, focusing on the fundamental rights and freedoms of the vulnerable and the marginalized.

Some of the critical areas in which we have been successful in enacting legislation since 2017 include minorities' rights, the juvenile justice system, protection of transgender persons, protection of underage girls, enforcement of women's property rights, safeguarding the rights of the disabled persons, protection of journalists and media professionals, protection against torture and custodial death and strengthening the safeguards for women against harassment.

Over the past decade, Pakistan has further strengthened its **domestic institutional mechanisms** to enhance the implementation of the international human rights conventions to which Pakistan is a State Party.



We believe that all rights are indivisible and the simultaneous promotion of civil and political rights along with the right to development remains vital for realization of an inclusive, peaceful and prosperous society. We are therefore committed as a matter of highest priority to promote realization of the 2030 SDG Agenda through a range of developmental initiatives, programmes and policies aimed at ensuring social inclusion, protection and justice.

We are resolved to take further meaningful steps to implement the accepted recommendations, especially pertaining to sustainable development, women empowerment, protection of the child, poverty alleviation, social protection schemes and protecting rights of persons with disabilities, among others.

We also continue to work towards **accession to international instruments** where we are ready. Pakistan has for example ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime on trafficking in persons.

We remain actively **engaged with the UN Treaty Bodies** and the UN Special Procedures and Mandate Holders.

Pakistan continues to lend **diplomatic and financial support to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)**. As a manifestation of that commitment, in this fiscal year, Pakistan has doubled its voluntary financial support to the OHCHR.

**Madam Vice President,**

As a developing country with fifth largest population in the world, a country affected deeply by the changing climate, extreme weather events and exogenous economic shocks not of its making, Pakistan has and will continue to prioritize rights, freedoms, dignity and better standards of life for everyone.

As is the case with other developing countries, Pakistan's capacity to promote and protect its citizens' social and economic rights remains under stress. We have consistently called for international cooperation and meaningful action to support states in similar conditions whose capacity has been severely affected by exogenous shocks.

Social and economic rights improvement across many countries requires much more than efforts by respective member states alone. It requires revisiting the systemic flaws in the existing international economic, financial, trade, taxation and investment architecture, its governance as well as policies.

While the UPR process is focused on states, its long-term success in advancing the human rights agenda also depends on external factors, that I just outlined.



This also requires that the Council treats the social and economic rights in the true spirit of the indivisibility of rights and raises their profile to their rightful place along with civil and political rights.

**Madam Vice President,**

Finally, as we commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, I wish to reiterate Pakistan's abiding and strong commitment to the respect for and advancement and protection of all human rights as well as international law, multilateralism as well as the UN Charter purposes and principles.

With this I would like to once again thank all stakeholders, and look forward to constructive engagement in this session.

Thank you!

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