



Statement, delivered on behalf of OIC by Ambassador Zaman Mehdi, Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN,, during General Debate under agenda item 10 at the 48th session of Human Rights Council

07 October 2021

Madam President,

The OIC attaches great significance to the Council's technical assistance mandate. We believe that this mandate provides an important toolkit to foster genuine dialogue and constructive engagement among States, OHCHR and HRC's allied mechanisms.

In order to ensure its effective and optimal use, technical assistance should be provided in consultation with and with consent of the concerned State, as stipulated in the UNGA resolution 60/251. Regrettably, this cardinal principle is being undermined.

In many cases, States have demonstrated willingness to address global concerns over human rights, including through requests for technical assistance. Instead of responding positively, intrusive counter-resolutions have been forced on them. Such an approach undermines the basic principles and purposes of the UN Charter, and must be eschewed.

Madam President,

In view of their inter-dependent, inter-related and mutually reinforcing relationship, technical assistance should target all human rights on the same footing and with the same emphasis. Unfortunately, inequitable resource allocation has constrained OHCHR's ability to focus on all human rights equally. The donors-driven agenda has further aggravated the problem.

The OIC, therefore, calls for equitable resource allocation, focusing on all basic civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights, as well as building necessary firewalls against the distortion caused by voluntary and earmarked contributions.

Madam President,

Such a fundamental shift in thinking, approach, and orientation is urgent and essential to enable countries to recover from the devastating socio-economic and public health effects of the COVID pandemic.

The rapidly mutating and spreading virus has exposed the human consequences of pursuing a selective approach towards the global human rights agenda. It has also made us realize that investments in sustainable development are a force-multiplier for protection and promotion of human rights. We hope these hard-learned lessons would lead to re-orienting the focus of Council's technical cooperation mandate towards addressing structural inequalities within and among States.



In this connection, the OIC draws attention towards the needs and predicament of developing countries, which continue to disproportionately endure socio-economic shocks of the pandemic.

We call on the Council to utilize its technical assistance mandate to support these countries in their domestic efforts to safeguard and advance basic rights of their citizens, including the right to equitable and timely access to affordable COVID vaccines, revival of livelihoods, provision of health services, food security, and fostering of sustainable development. I thank you, Madam President.