



**National Statement by Mr. Afaq Ahmad, Counsellor at Interactive Dialogue with
the Special Rapporteur on Right to Development**

51st Human Rights Council Session
15 September 2022

Mr. President,

We thank the Special Rapporteur for his timely report, examining focus of COVID response and recovery efforts from the perspective of right to development.

The SR has rightly contextualized the right to development from the lens of international human rights law, presenting development as a comprehensive economic, social and cultural process and placing wellbeing of individuals at the core of national and international efforts.

We share SR's assessment regarding the negative socio-economic impacts of COVID pandemic across the globe with more severe consequences for developing and least developing states. The SR has rightly observed that the economic crisis brought upon by the pandemic, combined with the existing debt distress, has significantly reduced the fiscal capacities of governments worldwide besides erosion of decades of development gains.

The path to economic recovery and achievement of SDGs is admittedly difficult and long. Yet it is achievable given demonstration of requisite commitment and political will.

We strongly believe that development-based strategies and advancement of human rights are mutually reinforcing. By alleviating extreme poverty, combating hunger, tackling climate change, and addressing inequalities, we ensure respect for human dignity, thus advancing respect for civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

We echo SR's call for reducing the gaps in financing the response and recovery plans, revising tax and eliminating tax havens. We appreciate SR's comments that how can the mutually reinforcing relationship among the 2030 Development Agenda, Paris Agreement and Addis Ababa Action Plan can be further promoted to achieve sustainable development?

I thank you.