



**National Statement, delivered by Danyal Hasnain, Third Secretary, during the Interactive Dialogue
with the Special Rapporteur on Situation of Human Rights Defenders**

52nd Session
15 March 2023

Madam Vice President,

Pakistan thanks the Special Rapporteur for her report.

As a participatory democracy, Pakistan appreciates the work of the civil society to promote respect for human rights values. The Journalist Act, 2021 was promulgated to protect journalists, media professionals and human rights activists from all forms of abuse, violence and exploitation and provide them with an enabling and safe environment to carry out their work.

We would have appreciated a greater reflection in the report on the situation of human rights defenders in UN recognized occupied territories.

The plight of civil society in the Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir is illustrative of the disturbing trend with grave human rights violations.

Since August 2019, India has scaled up its vicious crackdown on Kashmiri human rights defenders to crush dissent against its colonization project in the disputed territory.

In a systematic pattern, Indian authorities continue to raid local Kashmiri NGOs, force-close newspapers and intimidate leading activists. Human rights activist, Khurram Pervez is one the many victims of the draconian laws in the occupied territory along-with Atikur Rehman, Muhammad Zubair, and Fahad Shah, to name a few.

Special Procedures of this Council and human rights organizations have consistently raised concerns on the plight of human rights defenders in occupied Jammu & Kashmir, where all credible voices are made victim of draconian laws.

We urge the SR to monitor and report the situation of the Kashmiri civil society, and continue to report it to the Council.

I thank you.