



National statement delivered by Mr. Junaid Suleman, First Secretary, during the 3rd session of the Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law

Theme: Equal access to justice for all: a necessary element of democracy, rule of law and human rights protection

16 November 2021

Madam Chairperson,

We thank the panelists for their insightful remarks.

The desire to build just and equitable societies is the driving force of human progress and civilization. Legal empowerment of rights-holder advances civic participation, promotes rule of law and creates equal opportunities for development.

Democratic accountability is weaved into the fabric of Pakistan's parliamentary democracy 'Access to justice for all' is an inviolable right, enshrined in Pakistan's Constitution. Cognizant of its vital and enabling role, our Government's vision of a 'New Pakistan' is also anchored, inter alia, in promoting a culture of accountability, while protecting fundamental rights.

In order to facilitate speedy justice, Pakistan has harnessed the potential of e-governance and launched an online citizen portal, which serves as grievance redressal mechanism. As of now, 2.6 out of 2.8 million complaints have been resolved.

Judicial reforms are underway in order to strengthen legal coverage for the vulnerable. Establishment of separate courts for cases of sexual violence and child abuse attest to this fact.

Superior judiciary in Pakistan, in its judgments, has noted that all citizens have equal right of access to justice, including transgender persons, who had previously faced difficulties in this regard.

After the COVID outbreak, Pakistan took several timely measures to preserve rights of its citizens to legal remedy. Courts prioritized hearing of urgent cases, and provided interim relief in others. Now, the judiciary has resumed normal functioning.

Our Government is also working to upstream and downstream the broad concept of justice by pursuing a people-centric agenda. Its flagship 'Ehsaas Programme' is geared towards reducing poverty and extending social safety net to the marginalized.

Madam Chairperson,

A just and equitable world order, based on respect for the UN Charter and international law, is imperative for advancing peace, prosperity, and rights of everyone everywhere.



The COVID pandemic has driven home this point by exposing the glaring inequalities within and among States. Pakistan, therefore, stresses upon the need to democratize international financial, monetary and economic institutions, which should work for the benefit of all, not to enrich few.

We also believe that a rules-based international order will remain elusive unless justice is served to people, braving daily hardships and indignities in UN-recognized situation of foreign occupation. We urge the international community to invest more efforts in addressing such unresolved disputes, and holding the occupying powers to account for their widely documented human rights crimes. I thank you.