



National Statement, delivered by Mr. Zain Aftab, Assistant Director, during the Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health
56th HRC Session
24 June 2024

Mr. President,

It is difficult to address any issue related to the Right to Health without first mentioning the horrible crimes being committed with impunity, by the occupation forces, against the Palestinians, attacking health facilities including ambulances, and denying access to basic healthcare to the wounded and the sick.

The unabated suffering of the Palestinians continues, with more than 36,000 Palestinians been killed, and more than 80,000 injured with women and children accounting for around 70% of the fatalities. Such is the scale of suffering and violation of the right to health in Gaza.

Collapse of the healthcare system in Gaza is only expected to exacerbate due to continued shortages of fuel, essential goods, and medical supplies - around 70% of the hospitals remain non-functional, and 81% of the primary care clinics have ceased operations, as per WHO estimates.

The risk of unchecked spread of disease due to extremely poor nutrition, shelter, safety, clean water, sanitation, and access to health care would further deteriorate the prevalence of several illnesses such as acute jaundice, bloody diarrhea, and others.

Mr. President,

Addressing the topic at hand, my delegation believes that adequate measures should be taken for recovery and rehabilitation of those who are addicted to drugs to enable their effective socio-economic participation.

However, it is important to underscore that facilitating the use of drugs is not the right response in this context. More focus should be exerted on rehabilitation of drug users and our government is fully dedicated towards this objective.

Thank you.