



**National statement, delivered by Mr. Junaid Suleman, First Secretary, during the Interactive Dialogue with UN Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy at the 47<sup>th</sup> Session of Human Rights Council**

**02 July 2021**

Madam President,

Pakistan thanks the Rapporteur for his presentation.

Big Data and Artificial Intelligence (AI) solutions have become part and parcel of our daily lives, with promising socio-economic benefits.

However, this technological advancement has adversely affected our basic human rights, in particular the right to privacy and non-discrimination.

The collection and treatment of users' data by social media companies present one such instance.

Driven by commercial interests, these companies have sold data to other enterprises in breach of users' privacy rights.

More worryingly, they continue to deploy algorithm processes, without sufficient human supervision, for content moderation and virality. This has given birth to the dangerous phenomena of 'digital echo chambers' and 'filter bubbles'. As a result, offline racism, Islamophobia and prejudices have found a new life-line on digital platforms, inciting violence against minorities, including Muslims.

We, therefore, agree with the Rapporteur that human rights risk assessment should be carried out at each stage of the design and use of AI solutions, and that collaboration among governments, companies and other stakeholders should be instituted.

Pakistan echoes Rapporteur's concerns over risks to children's right to privacy due to their growing digital presence and footprint. Cyber-bullying, sexual exploitation and radicalization are some of the key issues which should be effectively addressed to make online spaces safe for our children.

We strongly disagree with the Rapporteur's views on linkage between children's privacy and their personality development. Such views ignore family values upheld by many societies and promote controversial themes, which lack legal basis in international law as well as universal consensus. We call on the mandate-holder to respect viewpoints and sensitivities of all States.

I thank you.