



National Statement, delivered by Mr. Afaq Ahmad, Counsellor, during Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment at the 46th session of Human Rights Council

(4 March 2021)

Madam President,

Pakistan thanks the Special Rapporteur for his thematic report focused on critical elements related to global water crisis.

We agree with the Special Rapporteur that clean water and ecosystem are vital for the realization of fundamental rights to life, food, drinking water, health and sanitation.

The scarcity of clean water is the key challenge which is likely to exacerbate further due to widening gap between water supply and demand, population explosion as well as climate change. Without addressing these challenges, achieving key SDGs would remain a distant dream.

Availability of clean water has special significance for developing countries including for our country due to heavy dependence on clean water in agriculture, energy-generation as well as other economic activities.

My country is faced with severe water scarcity including due to changing climate. We are taking steps to mitigate water scarcity, enhance forest cover, and restore biodiversity. Nationally launched Clean Green Pakistan programme has put special emphasis on clean drinking water, judicious use of water resources and recycling of grey water. We are implementing a 10 billion tree plantation programme.

We have noted that the Special Rapporteur has made a number of recommendations including international cooperation related to alternate models for water preservation. Could the Special Rapporteur:

- a) One, share some concrete examples where alternate models have achieved results especially in the context of international cooperation and technology transfer.
- b) Two, how IFIs and Development Banks would prioritize their programmes for clean and safe water in post Covid-19?

I thank you.