National statement delivered by Mr. Muneeb Ahmed, Counsellor, during Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the right to water and sanitation

60th Session of the Human Rights Council

(Geneva, 16 September 2025)

Mr. President,

Pakistan welcomes the Special Rapporteur and thanks him for presenting his report[1], of which we have taken note.

We concur that difficulties in upholding the right to drinking water are not the result of technical or resource constraints, but a consequence of inequalities within and across countries.

Yet another factor is the instrumentalisation of water flows in transboundary rivers for geopolitical motives.

In our region, the decision by an upper-riparian state to obstruct flows of water in contravention of the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 threatens to have dire consequences for people living downstream in Pakistan.

In addition to their rights to water and sanitation, the rights of people in Pakistan to food and environment, among others, are also directly threatened.

At a time when climate change-induced floods are wreaking havoc, agreements that ensure predictable water flows and exchange of hydrological data are even more important. States cannot abdicate their responsibility under customary international norms of transboundary water use, such as the duty to coordinate, avoid significant harm and peacefully settle differences.

Mr. Special Rapporteur,

Pakistan sees merit in your call for regional cooperation for climate change adaptation. It is equally important to emphasize the need for faithful implementation of transboundary water cooperation agreements.

International cooperation under binding treaties and norms should continue to govern the management of shared water resources. We would welcome your insights on human rights responses to ensure these safeguards are not breached.

Thank you.

-end-

[1] A/HRC/60/30 on "Water and energy nexus"