27th Session of the Working Group on the Right to Development

National statement by Mr. Muneeb Ahmed, Counsellor, during Item 4.3: Commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Right to Development

(Geneva, 18 May 2026)

Mr. Chair-Rapporteur,

Pakistan thanks the panellists for their insightful remarks, and joins the international community in commemorating the 40th anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Right to Development. This landmark instrument affirmed that development is an inalienable human right – not a charitable handout, but an entitlement of every person and all peoples.

The Declaration's vision remains as urgent today as in 1986. It recognised that development is not merely economic growth, but a comprehensive process rooted in participation, equity, and the fair distribution of benefits. It placed duties not only on States domestically, but on the international community as a whole. It recognises that the human person is the central subject of development.

Yet, four decades later, the promise of the Declaration remains largely unfulfilled. For many developing countries, external obstacles – inequitable global financial architecture, illicit financial flows, climate shocks, and geopolitical tensions – continue to undermine their capacity to realise the right to development for their populations. Pandemic and conflict-related disruptions in global supply chains have accentuated these vulnerabilities.

The right to development is not a slogan. It is the master key to bringing all human rights at par; be they civil, political, economic, social or cultural. As we mark this anniversary, it is timely to move from aspirational language to concrete action.

Pakistan therefore reiterates its call for the adoption of the International Covenant on the Right to Development without delay. This would translate the Declaration's principles into obligations and create a framework for international cooperation and solidarity. It would commemorate the anniversary with a focus on realising the right to development for all.

Thank you, Mr. Chair-Rapporteur.

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