National statement by Mr. Muneeb Ahmed, Counsellor, during General Debate under Item 9: "Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, follow-up to and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action"

63rd Session of the UN Human Rights Council

(Geneva, 30 September 2026)

Mr. President,

Pakistan aligns with the statements delivered on behalf of the Groups to which we belong. We take note of the reports presented and thank the Chair of the Group of Independent Eminent Experts, the Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) for their presentations.

Contemporary forms of racism, xenophobia and related intolerance have evolved in the quarter century since the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA). They are being mainstreamed into politics and legitimised by those who claim to uphold human rights.

A world free from discrimination must remain our goal. But it cannot be realised while a quarter of humanity is being dehumanised through surging Islamophobia.

In many parts of the world, Muslims face aggravated forms of discrimination and are subjected to hostility, hatred and stigmatisation to undermine their enjoyment of all human rights. Caricatures and negative stereotypes maligning Muslims and their faith are no longer confined to the margins of society. They shape public discourse, electoral strategy, and increasingly, State policy.

Mr. President,

Just across Pakistan's border with India, ruling elites demonise Muslims, target centuries-old Mosques and shrines, and undercut their political participation in their embrace of *Hindutva* as the organising principle of State policy.

In Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir, India, the occupying power with around 900,000 troops deployed in the territory, is engineering forced demographic change by converting Muslim majority to minority through fake domiciles and the continued denial of the right to self-determination of the people of Jammu & Kashmir.

The promises of non-discrimination made in Durban must be kept to peoples under foreign occupation, including in Indian-occupied Jammu & Kashmir.

Thank you.

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