



PAKISTAN

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

BY

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**AT THE
GENERAL SEGMENT OF THE TENTH SESSION OF THE
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

**Geneva
4 March 2009**

Statement by Ambassador Zamir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan, at the General Segment of the Tenth Session of the Human Rights Council, Geneva, 4 March 2009

I wish to thank all previous speakers for their valuable contributions.

We are also grateful, **Mr. President**, for your able and dedicated leadership which is essential to promote and implement this Council's agenda.

As a founding member of the Human Rights Council Pakistan has been constructively engaged in the institution building process of this esteemed body from the beginning and unreservedly supports universal application of agreed human rights standards. In concert with all other stakeholders including the High Commissioner and the civil society we will remain engaged to develop appropriate standards to protect and promote the rights of all.

Mr. President,

The democratic Government of Pakistan is fully committed to achieving the highest standards of human rights including social, economic and political justice, freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship and association.

We are in the final stages of establishing an Independent Human Rights Commission. The Parliament is currently considering new legislations for the further protection of women and children. The Prime Minister has announced a revision of all legal and administrative structures to ensure protection minorities and other vulnerable sections of society.

Last year, Pakistan ratified International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and signed International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment of Punishment and the Convention on Persons with Disabilities. In line with our constitutional processes, necessary steps to ratify these conventions are being undertaken.

We, nevertheless, recognize that more is yet to be achieved in several critical areas. In this context, we recognize the crucial role of our vibrant civil society and attach value to our interaction with the international human rights machinery and the Human Rights Council.

Mr. President,

It is our common responsibility to develop an international environment which discourages violations and strengthens protection mechanisms. The right of self determination is the bedrock for realization of all other fundamental rights. It must be protected and promoted. The Council must not detract from its responsibility to closely monitor and ensure respect for the human rights in all occupied territories, including Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Pakistan is committed to a peaceful resolution of all outstanding issues with India including the issue of Jammu and Kashmir in keeping with relevant UN resolutions. We hope that the composite dialogue process between Pakistan and India which, inter alia, covers the Jammu and Kashmir issue will be resumed soon.

I thank you, **Mr. President**.