



# PAKISTAN

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

---

56 Rue de Moillebeau, 1211 Geneva Tel: (4122) 749.1930 Fax: (4122) 734.8085

---

**PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**AMBASSADOR ZAMIR AKRAM  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PAKISTAN  
ON BEHALF OF THE OIC**

**IN RESPONSE TO THE UPDATE BY THE  
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
MS. NAVANETHAM PILLAY,**

**AT THE  
12<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

**Geneva  
14<sup>th</sup> September 2009**



**Statement by Ambassador Zamir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan, on behalf of the OIC, in response to the update by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, during the 12<sup>th</sup> Session of the HRC, Geneva, 14 September 2009**

Mr. President,

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the Member States of the OIC.

We welcome the High Commissioner's statement on a number of critical human rights issues and priority themes that she intends to focus on in detail. In her selection of overarching issues that form the root of chronic human rights conditions, she has rightly pointed to some of the serious violations and concerns, namely the scourge of discrimination, inviolability of civilian lives in conflict situations, importance of economic, social and cultural rights, rights of migrants and freedom of expression etc.

The statement makes a balanced review of different geographical regions, which is a positive trend and reflects the High Commissioner's personal commitment to deal with these issues in a fair, impartial and objective manner. It is our hope that this trend will continue to be followed by her Office in all its deliberations. Being an update, we would have also appreciated information regarding actions taken by the OHCHR on the stated concerns. At the same time, there is over emphasis on some isolated examples while other important issues involving gross and consistent violations of human rights in some other regions deserved to have been mentioned.

The OIC would also like to point out that some of the worst forms of discrimination that lie at the heart of the contemporary human rights discourse such as defamation of religions, increased racial and religious discrimination, incitement to hatred, violence and related intolerance against specific individuals and communities have not found place in the High Commissioner's statement. Respect for religious and cultural diversity is fundamental towards achieving the objective of discrimination free societies and a world of equal treatment for all. Calls for restrictions on religious symbols, dress codes or construction of religious sites run contrary to the fundamentals of human rights and must be addressed. We do hope that these important issues will be duly addressed by the High Commissioner in future.

Mr. President,

The High Commissioner has rightly pointed towards discrimination and harmful prejudice as sowing the seeds of conflicts, which affect millions of civilians. The OIC echoes her call that effective measures must be put in place to guarantee respect for international humanitarian and human rights laws in these circumstances. Due care must also be given to preventing conflicts by addressing the root causes that in many cases stem from conditions of prolonged foreign occupation and denial of the fundamental right of self determination, while fully respecting territorial integrity of States. A case in point is situation in Occupied Arab Territories.

Focus placed on prioritizing economic, social and cultural rights is a welcome step. Inequalities in distribution of resources also call for a review and regulation of international trade and monetary policies in line with human rights concerns. We support the High Commissioner's call for humane treatment of migrant communities, upholding the rule of law and the need to squarely addressing impunity. It is, however, important to recognize that issues of transitional justice cannot have a one size fits all solutions.

We believe that the High Commissioner's call to the Council to be a paragon of international cooperation on behalf of human rights, if pursued in an impartial and objective manner, can bring desired dividends in the lives of the victims. The OIC looks forward to working closely with all its partners and hope that important discussions scheduled in this Session, including follow up to Special Sessions, will provide an opportunity for all to show their good faith.

The OIC believes that the UPR mechanism has done well so far. Introspection and peer pressure instead of inquisition have led to a number of positive developments in the reviewed countries. Its linkages with other human rights mechanisms are well defined and need to be preserved. Again while fully endorsing the call for protecting independence and freedom of Special Procedures, the OIC would like to emphasize that it is a joint responsibility. Special Procedures must also ensure performance of their duties in strict adherence to the given mandate and the Code of Conduct.

In conclusion, the OIC would like to reiterate its commitment to work towards strengthening human rights mechanisms in an impartial, objective and non-politicized manner. We look forward to achieving these objectives in collaboration with all member states and the Office of the High Commissioner.

I thank you Mr. President.