**Turkish Government’s Input for the Oral Update of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Human Rights Implications of the COVID-19 Pandemic**

- COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected the lives of all persons around the world, regardless of wealth or social status. However, for vulnerable segments of the society, including women, children, persons with disabilities, older persons and migrants/refugees, the impacts of the pandemic are exacerbated.

- Therefore, while determining the measures to take against COVID-19, it is crucial to keep a human rights based approach that responds to the special challenges faced by these vulnerable groups. Social inclusion must be a key factor of the fight against the pandemic.

- Aware of this fact, Turkey devotes particular attention to protecting the rights of vulnerable groups in its efforts to curb the spread of the virus. Examples of some of these measures are provided below.

- All citizens with COVID-19 receive treatment free of charge, whether they have social security coverage or not.

- All children attending public schools continue to receive quality distant education during this period through the centralized education information network.

- 61% of the beneficiaries of social aid are women. Total sum of payments have increased during the pandemic.

- The UN Secretary General pointed out the heightened risk of domestic violence globally. Accordingly, Turkey has taken the necessary steps. Services provided to victims of violence continue uninterrupted during this period. In addition to “Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers” in every province, 145 Women's shelters are operating with a capacity of 3,482. Furthermore, a total of 46 facilities are used for housing victims of violence during the COVID -19 crisis.

- The “183 Social Support Line” offers free psychological and legal services to women, children, persons with disabilities, elderly, martyrs, and veterans on a 24/7 basis. Considering the increase in the number of calls as of March, a prioritization process has started. Victims of violence calling the helpline can immediately access the relevant support staff by pressing "0".

- Those deprived of their liberty represent another vulnerable group. In this context, improvements have been introduced within the framework of the Law No.7242 on execution of penal sentences that recently entered into force. So far, approximately 95,000 prisoners who meet the requirements of the law have been released. Moreover, the law increases the health measures taken within penitentiary institutions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.