**Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations**

**Pakistan's national statement delivered by Mr. Ali Khan Jadoon, Member National Assembly**

**Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law**

**Panel on Parliaments as key actors in the promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law**

**22 November 2018**

Mr. President,

 Parliaments represent the will of the people. Parliaments are also at the heart of a functioning democracy. Their active and meaningful legislative role and oversight is essential for a true democratic culture to flourish and for all human rights to be promoted and protected.

2. Parliaments provide a important platform for highlighting public grievances and their redressel. In doing so, culture of accountability is promoted which is necessary for strengthening the rule of law.

3. Pakistan's National Parliament and Provincial Assemblies are playing their due roles as envisaged by our Constitution. They are providing necessary parliamentary oversight of all issues especially those related to accountability and human rights. Our parliamentarians are actively engaged with international organizations such as the Inter Parliamentary Union, thus building a bridge between the aspirations of Pakistanis and our common objectives internationally.

4. Our Parliament is working for the empowerment of vulnerable segments of the society especially the women and minorities. Our Constitution ensures that minorities representation in the parliament is more than their overall proportion in population. The political participation of minorities is being ensured by the reservation of 10 seats in the National Assembly, 4 in the Senate and 23 in the Provincial Assemblies.

5. Our Constitution also ensures adequate women representation through reserved seats. The Election Act 2017 gives the Election Commission powers to declare polls void in a constituency if female voter turnout is less than 10%. The Law also provides that political parties give at least 5% tickets to women for general seats. The indirectly elected quota for women in National Assembly is 60 and Senate is 17 seats apart from the general seats. Women are also playing key role in policy and decision making in Pakistan by acquiring positions of eminence including Speaker and Deputy Speakers of National and Provincial Assemblies, Cabinet Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries, Chairpersons of Standing Committees. The first Women Prime Minister, the first Women Foreign Minister and the first Women Speaker of National Assembly in the Muslim world hailed from Pakistan.

6. Our Parliament is determined to ensuring protection of all fundamental freedoms and also in promoting equitable, inclusive and sustainable development which are at the heart of burgeoning democratic societies. Together we can work for the achievement of 2030 development agenda in a manner that 'no one is left behind'.

I thankyou Mr.President.