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

**Pakistan's national statement delivered by Syed Javed Hasnain, Member National Assembly**

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

**Parliaments facing current global challenges to human rights, democracy and the rule of law**

**22 November 2018**

Mr. President,

The role of parliaments both nationally and internationally for promoting a culture of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law cannot be overstated. The parliaments not only represent the free will of the people and their aspirations but also act as a liaison between the people and the institutions and organizations both nationally and internationally dealing with complex socio-political and economic challenges.

2. We believe that parliaments can play an important role in addressing contemporary global challenges in the following ways:

1. comprehensive dialogue at all levels can shun away many fears and apprehensions and pave the way for an environment of trust, confidence and mutual respect. Moreover, the involvement of parliamentarians in various processes can helps in national ownership of policies and can kindle national discussion on issues of global concern;
2. we can promote rule of law globally through constructive engagement. Interventionist policies undermining the UN Charter have led to chaos, death and destruction and must be condemned by all;
3. we must focus on resolution of current conflicts which have resulted in unprecedented global human rights and humanitarian challenges. International peace and stability can be achieved in true sense by addressing the core reasons for the international disputes plaguing us for decades. In this regard, grant of right to self-determination remains at the heart of the UN Charter for ensuring human dignity and promotion and protection of all human rights. We acknowledge the contribution of the recent OHCHR Kashmir Report in highlighting the plight of people under subjugation. It is heartening to see that parliaments around the world are taking note of the findings of this report. The recent report by All Parties Parliamentary Group on Kashmir of the UK Parliament is one such example. Through our collective efforts, we can become voice of the oppressed people demanding their right to self-determination in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions;
4. the forces of hatred, xenophobia and discrimination must be pushed back. The parliaments from around the world must unite together against populist electoral politics based on ideologies of fascism and differentiation of 'us' against 'them';
5. with our common voice, we can overcome current global challenges especially those related to Climate Change, hate speech, hate crimes, anti migrant rhetoric and disinformation. The forces of violent extremism and terrorism can be defeated through global resolve and zero tolerance. The parliaments around the world can play their part in educating the masses and building up counter narrative against such vitriolic ideologies;
6. we must redouble our efforts for reducing inequalities both within and between nations and promote international cooperation in the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
7. human rights, democracy, rule of law and sustainable development are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. We can only achieve our objectives by supporting each one of them in a balanced manner.

I thankyou Mr. President.