

**Information and Learning Material on Core Human Rights
Conventions Ratified by Pakistan**



Government of Pakistan
Ministry of Human Rights
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS	1
CAIRO DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISLAM	4
INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS	7
INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS	12
INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION	15
CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN.....	19
CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE	22
CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD.....	26
CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES	31

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (UDHR)

Overview

1. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was drafted in response to the horrors of World War II, which highlighted the horrifying implications of a total disregard for human rights. With the end of the conflict and the establishment of the United Nations, global leaders resolved to draft a comprehensive statement of inalienable human rights.
2. The United Nations General Assembly announced the Declaration on 10 December 1948 in Paris (Resolution 217A) as “*a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations.*” It establishes essential human rights to be uniformly guaranteed to people everywhere.
3. The rights listed within the Declaration are generically worded and were later categorized into two distinct Conventions: *The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)* and *the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)*. The UDHR, ICCPR and ICESCR combined are referred to as the "International Bill of Rights".
4. Pakistan became a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.

Content and Scope of the Declaration

5. The UDHR is made up of 30 articles that encompass the most fundamental rights and freedoms of people (both collectively and individually) all over the world.
6. Articles 1 – 2 recognise inherent human dignity, equality and brotherhood as the ‘foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world’.
7. Articles 3 – 11 pertain to the rights of individual i.e. the right to life, liberty, and personal security; freedom from slavery, torture and other degrading treatment; the right to equality before law; the right to fair trial, etc.
8. Articles 12 – 17 refers to the rights of individual within a civil and political society. These include *inter alia* the right to privacy; right to free movement; the right to a nationality; the right to marriage and family; and the right to own property.
9. Article 18 – 21 set out the spiritual and religious rights of individuals such freedom of belief and religion; freedom of opinion and information; the right of peaceful assembly and association; and the right to participate in Government and in Free Elections.
10. Articles 22 – 27 concern an individual’s social, economic and cultural rights. They include the right to social security; the right to work; the right to rest and leisure; the right to adequate living standard; the right to education, and the right to participate in the cultural life of community.

Domestic Implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

11. Corresponding Constitutional Provisions

According to the Constitution of Pakistan, 1973 all citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law. To fulfill this objective, the Constitution has provided some fundamental rights and freedom to Pakistanis.

The Constitution contains 25 rights in all of which 15 relate to civil and political rights whereas the rest of the 10 are social and economic rights.

Article 3	Elimination of exploitation
Article 4	Right of individuals to be dealt with in accordance with law, etc.
Article 9	Security of a person
Article 10	Safeguards as to arrest and detention
Article 10A	Right to fair trial
Article 11	Slavery, forced labour, etc. prohibited
Article 12	Protection against retrospective punishment
Article 13	Protection against double punishment and self-incrimination
Article 14	Inviolability of dignity of man, etc.
Article 15	Freedom of movement, etc.
Article 17	Freedom of association
Article 18	Freedom of trade, business or profession
Article 20	Freedom to profess religion and to manage religious institutions
Article 21	Safeguard against taxation for purposes of any particular religion
Article 22	Safeguards as to educational institutions in respect of religion, etc.
Article 25	Equality of citizens
Article 25A	Right to education
Article 26	Non-discrimination in respect of access to public places
Article 27	Safeguard against discrimination in services
Article 28	Preservation of language, script and culture
Article 33	Parochial and other similar prejudices to be discouraged
Article 34	Full participation of women in national life
Article 35	Protection of family, etc
Article 36	Protection of minorities
Article 37	Promotion of social justice and eradication of social evils
Article 38	Promotion of social and economic well-being of the people

Impact and Relevance of the Declaration

12. The UDHR is drafted as "soft law," meaning it is not a treaty, and does not impose legal responsibilities on States. It is, nevertheless, a representation of basic principles held by all States of the world. It has had a significant impact on the evolution of international human rights legislation.
13. Since its adoption, the UDHR is widely regarded as having inspired and opened the way for supplementary binding treaties, which are still in force on a permanent basis at the global and regional levels today. These are some examples:
 - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966
 - International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights 1966
 - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination 1965
 - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women 1979
 - Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment 1984
 - Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
 - Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006

CAIRO DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISLAM

Overview

1. The Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam (CDHR) was adopted by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on August 05, 1990. 45 States have signed the Declaration including Pakistan.
2. Islamic critics state that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was secular and designed to be culturally specific to the West while ignoring the cultural differences of other nations. Although Islamic countries' delegations participated in drafting the UDHR, their voices were often overshadowed by their formal colonizers.
3. The CDHR came as a product not only of this tension, but also from the feeling that the Western-designed UN system has systematically failed to address issues of an urgent matter to the Muslim world like Palestine, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and Kashmir. Thus, the OIC members decided in the aftermath of the Cold War to establish their own human rights system, which will have its roots in Qur'an, Hadith, Islamic teaching, and the narrative of the Islamic Umma as having a "civilizing and historical role" as a model for all of humanity, as mentioned in its preamble.
4. The CDHR stipulates fundamental human rights based on traditional Islamic law. The Cairo Declaration not by itself depicts that Muslim states intend to have an alternative and independent human rights system, rather it only intends to provide protection and safeguard to the rights given in Islam, which are indispensable for Muslims to apart from. The Cairo Declaration, in its preamble, explicates to uphold human rights that are inviolable and inalienable in Islam.

Content and Scope of the Declaration

5. The Cairo Declaration is made up of 25 articles that encompasses fundamental rights which are provided by the Quran and Shariah to the Muslim *ummah*. The preamble, states that "all human beings form one family whose members are united by their subordination to Allah and descent from Adam.
6. Article 1 reaffirms the principles of non-discrimination and equality. It forbids discrimination on the basis of race, colour, language, belief, sex, religion, political affiliation, social status or other considerations.
7. Articles 2 – 23 guarantees the political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights of individuals. It safeguards the right to life. The CDHR also guarantees non-belligerents – such as old men, women and children, the wounded and sick, and prisoners of war – the right to food, shelter, and access to safety and medical treatment in times of war.

The CDHR affords women equal human dignity, own rights to enjoy, duties to perform, own civil entity, financial independence, and the right to retain her name and lineage. Both men and women

are given the right to marriage regardless of their race, colour, or nationality. The Declaration makes it incumbent upon both parents to protect the child, both before and after birth, while stressing that the husband is responsible for the social and financial protection of his family, including any children and wives.

The Declaration recognises the rights to property and privacy for the individuals. In addition to this, it protects individuals from arbitrary arrest, torture, maltreatment, or indignity. Moreover, the CDHR guarantees the presumption of innocence and awards the right to fair trial. It does not recognize crimes or punishments than those mentioned in the sharia.

The right to freedom and self-determination is emphasized in the Declaration, and opposes enslavement, oppression, exploitation, and colonialism. The CDHR establishes equality and justice for all, with the limitations provided under Islamic law. Moreover, it also guarantees all individuals the right to participate in the administration of a State’s public affairs.

The CDHR also recognizes the right to freedom of opinion and expression in such manner as would not be contrary to the principles of the Shariah.

Domestic Implementation of CDHR

8. Corresponding Constitutional Provisions

Article 2A	Require constitution to be in accordance to injunctions of Islam
Article 4	Equal Protection of Law
Article 8	Laws inconsistent with or in Derogation of Fundamental Rights to be void
Article 9	The Right to Life, Liberty, and Security of Person
Article 10	Safeguards as to Arrest and Detention
Article 10A	Right to Fair Trial
Article 11	Prohibition on slavery, forced labour, etc.
Article 14	Inviolability of Dignity of Man, etc.
Article 15	Freedom of Movement
Article 17	Freedom Of Political Participation
Article 18	Freedom of trade, business or profession
Article 19	Freedom of Speech
Article 22	Safeguards as to Educational Institutions in Respect of Religion etc.
Article 25	Equality of Citizens
Article 25A	Right to Education
Article 35	Protection of Family, etc.
Article 36	Protection of Minorities
Article 37	Promotion of Social Justice and Eradication of Social Evils

Impact and Relevancy

9. The OIC included many of the UDHR's rights in the agreement. However, it left out women and non-Muslim rights. Almost a decade later, in the early 2010s, the OIC examined the instrument and issued the OIC Declaration on Human Rights (ODHR). The paper was to be adopted by the organization's Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) in April 2020. However, the COVID-19 epidemic canceled the adoption of the Declaration. The ODHR represents concepts inherent in international human rights legislation more accurately.
10. It reflects the OIC's determination to move closer to the UDHR's core human rights criteria. The new declaration allows the International Organizations and Governments to engage in dialogue with the OIC on areas of divergence between the ODHR and the UDHR. It also enables them to collaborate on areas of convergence, such as the prohibition of torture, women's rights, and the right to education, to protect such freedoms in practice.
11. The ODHR, like its predecessor, is a non-binding document with largely symbolic importance. It is, nonetheless, worth examining for four reasons. To begin, the growth of the Cairo Declaration provides a helpful prism through which to comprehend human rights conflicts, intellectual currents, and political shifts in the Muslim world. Second, non-binding human rights statements can transform into binding conventions and treaties. Third, the proclamation may result in the creation of norms. Finally, the OIC plays a vital role in international diplomacy. The ODHR articulates the organization's concept of universal freedoms and assists us in understanding growing fault lines in global human rights politics.

INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS (ICCPR)

Overview

1. After World War II, a broad consensus emerged at the worldwide level demanding that the individual human being be placed under the protection of the international community. In order to make human rights an instrument effectively shaping the lives of individuals and nations, more than just a political proclamation was needed. Hence, there was a broad agreement that the substance of the Universal Declaration should be translated into the hard legal form of an international treaty.
2. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) was adopted by the United Nations in 1966, and has been ratified by 174 countries including Pakistan on June 23, 2010.
3. The ICCPR is probably the most important human rights treaty in the world, given that it has universal coverage, contains a large number of rights, and applies to all classes of person. It is designed to protect civil and political rights, such as the right to life, freedom from arbitrary detention, and freedom of expression.
4. As an international Treaty, ICCPR creates obligations between the State Parties i.e. it compels States to adopt all legislative or other measures necessary to give effect to the Covenant's rights. Persons whose rights have been violated are to be ensured an effective remedy before domestic judicial or other organs. The Covenant therefore creates human rights that may be enforced by individuals or groups by way of domestic remedies.

Content and Scope of the Covenant

5. Article 1 affirms all peoples' right to self-determination, which includes the right to "*freely select their political status,*" pursue economic, social, and cultural goals, and manage and dispose of their resources. It acknowledges a people's negative right not to be deprived of their means of sustenance. It puts a responsibility on those parties remaining responsible for non-self-governing and trust areas to support and respect their self-determination.
6. Articles 2 – 5 state that a State party must respect and protect the rights enshrined in the Covenant to all individuals subject to its authority. With a few exceptions, these rights apply to all individuals on the State's territory without discrimination. If required, States should establish legislation to safeguard these rights adequately and provide remedies to those whose rights under the Covenant have been violated.
7. Articles 6 – 27 lists the substantive rights and fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the treaty. These are the articles that are commonly invoked by individuals alleging that their rights under the Covenant have been violated.

It provides protection of the life, liberty and physical security of the individual. It also sets out specific prohibitions on torture, slavery and forced labour. The rights of a person in the context of deprivation of liberty, commonly by arrest, and in detention are also covered here.

The Covenant also deals with movement into, out of and within a State, with particular rules applicable to the expulsion of aliens.

In addition to the Covenant guarantees the right to a fair trial, prohibits retrospective criminal punishment, and provides that everyone has the right to be recognized as a person before the law.

It also address the right to privacy, freedom of thought and religion, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to peaceful assembly, freedom of association, including through trade unions. The right to marriage and family are also recognized.

Article 25 stands alone as the major right to political participation in the Covenant, outlining the rights to vote and to be elected, as well as the rights to take part in public affairs and to have equal access to the public service.

The Covenant also obliges State Parties to ensure the rights to equality before the law and to equal protection of the law, without discrimination. It guarantees persons belonging to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities the right, in community with other members of the group, to enjoy and practice their own culture, religion or language.

8. Articles 28 – 45 sets up the Human Rights Committee (HRC) and provides for its functions and procedures. It also allows parties to recognize the competence of the Committee to resolve disputes between parties on the implementation of the Covenant.

The Human Rights Committee (HRC) to supervise States parties' compliance with the obligations under the Covenant. The Committee consists of 18 independent experts, and are charged with three supervisory functions under the ICCPR: the consideration of periodic reports by States Parties; the making of General Comments; and management of the inter-State complaints procedure.

All State Parties are required to submit Periodic Reports on the measures they have adopted to give effect to the rights recognized in the ICCPR and the progress made towards the enjoyment of those rights by individuals. Such reports must be submitted by each State within one year of becoming party to the Covenant and at regular periods thereafter (generally about four years), as determined by the HRC.

The Committee normally holds three sessions of three weeks each year, and reports annually to the General Assembly. These periodic reports are examined in public in the presence of a State Party's representative. The Committee may request further details from a State party and may put questions to its representative. On completion of the reporting process, the Committee issues concluding statements which reflect the main areas of discussion. Here, the Committee may note its concerns regarding aspects of a State's implementation of obligations, or it may make suggestions and recommendations indicating ways in which the State's obligations might be fulfilled more effectively.

9. Articles 46 – 47 includes savings provisions i.e. the Covenant shall not be interpreted as interfering with the operation of the United Nations or "the inherent right of all peoples to enjoy and utilize fully and freely their natural wealth and resources."
10. Articles 48 – 53 contains standard treaty provisions concerning mechanics for becoming a party, notification and amendments.

Domestic Implementation of ICCPR

11. Corresponding Constitutional Provisions

Article 3	Elimination of Exploitation
Article 4	Equal Protection of Law
Article 8	Laws inconsistent with or in Derogation of Fundamental Rights to be void
Article 9	The Right to Life, Liberty, and Security of Person
Article 10	Safeguards as to Arrest and Detention
Article 10A	Right to Fair Trial
Article 11	Prohibition on slavery, forced labour, etc.
Article 12	Protection against Retrospective Punishment
Article 13	Protection against Double Punishment and Self-Incrimination
Article 14	Inviolability of Dignity of Man, etc.
Article 15	Freedom of Movement
Article 16	Freedom of Assembly
Article 17	Freedom of Association
Article 18	Freedom of trade, business or profession
Article 19	Freedom of Speech
Article 19A	Right to Information
Article 20	Freedom to Profess Religion
Article 21	Safeguard against Taxation for Purpose of any Particular Religion
Article 22	Safeguards as to Educational Institutions in Respect of Religion etc.
Article 25	Equality of Citizens
Article 26	Non-Discrimination in Respect of Access to Public Places
Article 27	Safeguard against Discrimination in Service
Article 28	Preservation of Language, Script and Culture
Article 33	Parochial and other Similar Prejudices to be Discouraged
Article 34	Woman Rights, Full Participation of Women in National Life
Article 35	Protection of Family, etc.
Article 36	Protection of Minorities
Article 37	Promotion of Social Justice and Eradication of Social Evils

12. Legislation, Policies and other Measures

National Action Plan for Human Rights
National Commission for Human Rights
National Commission for Minorities
National Commission on the Rights of Child
National Commission on the Status of Women
Harassment of Women at Workplace (Amendment) Act 2022
Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2018
Enforcement of Women’s Property Rights Act 2020
ICT Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2020
National Committee for the Implementation of the UNCRPD
Legal Aid and Justice Authority Act, 2020
ICT Senior Citizens Act, 2021
Ehsaas Program

13. Reporting Status

- Under Article 40 of the ICCPR, Pakistan submitted its initial report in October 2015 to the HRC. Since then, Pakistan regularly submits periodic reports, with the 2nd Periodic Report in the process of submission.
- In compliance with the Convention’s Reporting Guidelines, a series of extensive provincial and national consultations are conducted with a range of relevant stakeholders including the respective government departments, the civil society and academia, and further information is gathered that has also been included in this report after due scrutiny and analysis of the information received.
- Written responses to questionnaires developed in line with the Articles of the Covenant are sought and received from all concerned quarters by the Reporting Unit of the Ministry of Human Rights that are also included in this Report and shared during the consultations.

Relevancy and Impact

14. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) is a multilateral treaty that commits its parties to respect the civil and political rights of individuals, including the right to life, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, electoral rights and rights to due process and a fair trial. There are two Optional Protocols to the Covenant.

15. However, Pakistan has not signed or ratified any of the optional protocols. The First Optional Protocol establishes an individual complaints mechanism, allowing individuals to complain to the Human Rights Committee about violations of the Covenant. This has led to the creation of a complex jurisprudence

on the interpretation and implementation of the Covenant. The Second Optional Protocol abolishes the death penalty; however, countries were permitted to make a reservation allowing for use of death penalty for the most serious crimes of a military nature, committed during wartime.

INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS (ICESCR)

Overview

1. Economic, social, and cultural rights are the freedoms, privileges, and entitlements that individuals and communities require to live a life of dignity.
2. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 1966. Presently, over 169 countries are party to the Convention including Pakistan which ratified ICESCR on April 17, 2008.
3. As one of two international treaties that make the ‘International Bill of Human Rights’, the ICESCR provides the legal framework to protect and preserve the most basic economic, social and cultural rights.
4. These rights are said to be progressive in nature. The core obligations of each of these rights are to be implemented with immediate effect by state parties. However, states must work towards constantly improving the realization of the content of these rights and maximum utilization of resources in a non-discriminatory manner. These rights impose obligations on State Parties to take positive steps and to fulfil rights.
5. Economic, Social and Cultural Rights are predominantly rights that states aspire to achieve and ensure to their citizens. They provide policy framework for governments to work with to ensure full enjoyment of all human rights by all.

Content and Scope of the Covenant

6. Article 1 reaffirms the right to self-determination to pursue their economic, social and cultural development.
7. Articles 2 – 5 establishes the principle of progressive realisation. It obliges each State Party to take steps, individually and through international assistance and co-operation, especially economic and technical, to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the rights recognized in the Covenant by all appropriate means, including particularly the adoption of legislative measures, without discrimination.

Furthermore, it ensures equal rights of men and women with respect to the rights in the Covenant, imposes limitations in enjoyment of rights only for promoting the general welfare of a democratic society, and reaffirms non-derogation from the rights enshrined in the Covenant i.e. no person, group or government has the right to destroy any of these rights.

8. Articles 6 – 15 deals with the protected rights: the right to work; the right to the enjoyment of just, and favorable conditions of work; the right to form and join trade unions; the right to social security, including social insurance; the right to the protection of the family; the right to an adequate standard of living; the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; the right of everyone to education; and the right to take part in cultural life. It also provides criteria for the permissible limitation of these rights.
9. Article 16 – 25 pertains to the monitoring of the Covenant. It establishes the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights which is in charge of the examination of periodical reports submitted by State Parties, it adopts General Comments on the scope of the protected rights and indicating the areas on which information should be provided. At the same time, the Committee provides treatment to the complaints.

All States Parties are expected to submit regular reports to the Committee on the implementation of ECSR rights domestically. States must report initially within two years of ratifying the Covenant and thereafter every five years. The Committee examines the reports and addresses its concerns and recommendations to the State party in the form of concluding observations.

10. Articles 26 – 31 deals with amendment, ratification and entry into force.

Domestic Implementation of ICESCR

11. Corresponding Constitutional Provisions

Article 25	Equality of Citizens
Article 25A	Right to Education
Article 27	Safeguard against Discrimination in Service
Article 28	Preservation of language, script and culture
Article 35	Protection of family, etc.
Article 37	Promotion of social justice and eradication of social evils.
Article 38	Promotion of social and economic well-being of the people.

12. Legislation, Policies and other Measures

National Action Plan for Human Rights
National Commission for Human Rights
National Commission for Minorities
National Commission on the Rights of Child
National Commission on the Status of Women

Employees Old Age Benefits Act 1976
National Food Security Policy in 2018
National Education Policy Framework 2018
The Enforcement of Women’s Property Rights Act, 2020
Legal Aid and Justice Authority Act, 2020
National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights 2021
Ehsaas Programme
Sehat Sahulat Program

13. Reporting Status

- Pakistan submitted its first report under Articles 16 & 17 of ICESCR in October 2015. The report contained information and developments from 2008 to 2014 which have been obtained from various stakeholders through detailed consultative meetings and through information made available by the Government. Pakistan’s 2nd Periodic Report on ICESCR is due in June, 2022
- All the reports are prepared in coordination with all stakeholders along with the contributions of various Ministries and Departments both at the Federal and the Provincial levels.

Relevancy and Impact

14. The influence of the ICESCR on legal developments, including treaties and jurisprudence, has been substantive. It elaborated and turned into legal rules the so-called “social rights” on which the International Labour Organization had been working since the end of the First World War, like work, social security, hours of work, work accidents, minimum working age, freedom of association and the right to form and join trade unions, non-discrimination in employment, among others. It also deals with some of the subjects which the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization work on.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (ICERD)

Overview

1. The United Nations General Assembly adopted the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination was adopted in the 1965. The Convention expands on key statements of principle in the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
2. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) requires States Parties to pursue a policy of eliminating all forms of racial discrimination and promote understanding among all races, to refrain from all acts and practices of racial discrimination, and to prohibit and prosecute such acts.
3. The Convention defines racial discrimination and imposes a duty on the States to provide all civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights to all people without regard to race. It also includes a fundamental right to adequate court complaint processes (legal remedies) in the case of racial discrimination.
4. Over 182 States are party to the Convention, including Pakistan which ratified to the treaty in 1966.

Content and Scope of the Convention

5. ICERD consists of 25 articles defining racial discrimination and determining responsibilities of States.
6. Article 1 defines racial discrimination as “*any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.*”
7. Articles 2 – 7 further sets out the obligations of State Parties. The Convention imposes an obligation on State Parties to take appropriate measures to prohibit and eliminate racial discrimination, including apartheid, racial segregation, and racial incitement. Furthermore, it also obliges State Parties to assure everyone within their jurisdiction effective protection and remedies against any acts of racial discrimination.

In particular, Article 5 provides a non-exhaustive list of rights and States parties have the obligation to guarantee that everyone can enjoy these rights. The States Parties to ICERD

commit to educating and informing their people about tolerance and friendship between all people of all racial or ethnic groups. The States Parties agree to protect everyone’s human rights to: equal treatment before the law; protection from government-inflicted violence; vote and stand for election; take part in government; move and reside within the nation’s borders; leave and then return to the nation; marry the person of their own choosing; own property; inherit property; assemble peacefully; think and worship freely; secure a job; secure housing; receive health care and social protection services; go to school; participate in cultural and social activities and access any place or service intended for general public use.

8. Article 8 – 25 establishes the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and focuses on their mandate i.e. monitoring State Party implementation of the obligations under ICERD.

The Committee comprises of 18 independent experts who meet twice a year for three weeks each. State parties are obliged to submit an initial report within one year of ratifying the ICERD and Periodic Reports every two years on the implementation status of the rights. Following the filing of State reports, the CERD will hold a constructive discourse with each State party that filed a State report, and provide suggestions in the form of concluding observations. It also employs a follow-up mechanism to check implementation of its recommendations.

The Committee reports to the General Assembly annually, providing suggestions and general recommendations based of the reports and information received from States Parties. It also develops general comments that interpret the ICERD's articles and provisions in order to help State parties in meeting their commitments.

Domestic Implementation of CERD

9. Corresponding Constitutional Provisions

Article 20	Freedom to Profess Religion
Article 21	Safeguard against Taxation for Purpose of any Particular Religion
Article 22	Safeguards as to Educational Institutions in Respect of Religion etc.
Article 25	Equality of Citizens
Article 26	Non-Discrimination in Respect of Access to Public Places
Article 27	Safeguard against Discrimination in Service
Article 28	Preservation of Language, Script and Culture

10. Legislation, Policies and other Measures

National Action Plan for Human Rights
National Commission for Minorities
Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2018
The Enforcement of Women’s Property Rights Act, 2020
ICT Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2020
ICT Senior Citizens Act, 2021
Ehsaas Programme

- The Government of Pakistan is in the process of amending the Article 25 of the Constitution, which guarantees the citizens right to equality. The proposed amendment will expand the definition of Equality and Discrimination. It proposes that the State shall not discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on grounds of race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, color, age, disability, religion or language; and promote the achievement of equality, by taking measures designed to promote those disadvantaged by discrimination and undertake legislation to enforce and ensure equality for all citizens.
- This wider scope of the constitutional protection of equality has been proposed in view of the obligations and commitments under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and other international conventions ratified by Pakistan.

11. Reporting Status

- Pakistan has submitted multiple reports under Article 9 of the Convention, with the Combined 26th and 27th Periodic Report being the latest to be submitted before the Treaty Body in 2021. The reports are the outcome of extensive consultative process done in collaboration with all stakeholders at federal and provincial levels as well as CSOs, academia etc.

Relevancy and Impact

12. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) obliges State Parties to pursue by all appropriate means a policy of eliminating racial discrimination in all its forms and promoting understanding among all races, refrain from all acts and practices of racial discrimination and prohibit and prosecute such acts.
13. The definition of ICERD sets out five grounds of discrimination; this includes race, colour, descent, and national or ethnic origin. The Convention defines racial discrimination and lists civil, political, economic, social and cultural human rights whose enjoyment must be

guaranteed to everyone without distinction as to race. It also contains the basic right to effective judicial complaint procedures (legal remedies) in the case of all acts of racial discrimination.

CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)

Overview

1. The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted in 1979. It is also known as the International Bill of Rights for Women that sets out in detail the prohibition of discrimination against women in all areas of life, and has been ratified by 189 countries including Pakistan in 1996.
2. The Convention's framers concluded that the gender-neutral symmetrical approach that covered discrimination on the basis of sex in other international treaties did not adequately recognise the pervasive discrimination against women on the basis of their sex, and that an asymmetric and gender-specific approach was required.
3. The preamble to the Convention reaffirms faith in fundamental human rights, dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women. By accepting the Convention, States commit themselves to undertake a series of measures to end discrimination against women in all forms, including:
 - to incorporate the principle of equality of men and women in their legal system, abolish all discriminatory laws and adopt appropriate ones prohibiting discrimination against women;
 - to establish tribunals and other public institutions to ensure the effective protection of women against discrimination; and
 - to ensure elimination of all acts of discrimination against women by persons, organizations or enterprises.

Content and Scope of the Convention

4. The Convention provides a comprehensive set of rights for women in civil, political, economic, social and cultural fields. It also provides a definition of discrimination against women
5. Article 1 defines discrimination against women to any distinction, exclusion or restriction that affects women's enjoyment of political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other rights on an equal basis with men.
6. Article 2 – 6 sets out the States obligations to eliminate discrimination against women. Accordingly, it obliges the contracting states to actively adopt laws and regulations, implement policies and change practices to achieve equality between women and men, in particular in political, social, economic and cultural terms. Furthermore, State Parties are

also directed to abolish discriminatory cultural practices and take appropriate measures to eliminate sex role stereotyping and prejudice. States Parties must take all measures, including legislation to stop all forms of trafficking and exploitation of women for prostitution.

7. Article 7 – 16 lays down the fundamental freedoms guaranteed to women, including equal rights to vote, hold public office and participate in civil society; right to nationality, education, access to healthcare and family planning; equal rights to family benefits, financial credit and to participate in recreational activities, sports and cultural life; right to work, employment opportunities, equal remuneration, free choice of profession and employment, social security, and protection of health; right to equality in marriage and family life; and the right to equality before the law.
8. Article 17 – 30 details the establishment of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, including the role in the monitoring in the implementation of the Convention, and administration of the Committee through its consideration of State reports, individual complaints, inter-State complaints, and inquiry requests, and its preparation of general recommendations, statements, and general discussions.

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women is composed of 23 independent experts on women’s rights, and holds one annual session lasting for no more than two weeks in Geneva, Switzerland.

Under Article 18 of the Convention, States Parties are obliged to submit an initial report within one year of the entry into force of the Convention for the individual State Party and every four years thereafter, or whenever the Committee requests them.

Domestic Implementation of CEDAW

9. Corresponding Constitutional Provision

Article 25	Equality of Citizens
Article 25A	Right to Education
Article 26	Non-Discrimination in Respect of Access to Public Places
Article 27	Safeguard against Discrimination in Service
Article 32	Promotion of Local Government Institutions
Article 34	Full Participation of Women in National Life
Article 35	Protection of Family, etc.
Article 37	Promotion of Social Justice and Eradication of Social Evils

10. Legislation, Policies and other Measures

The Protection Against Harassment of Women in the Workplace Act, 2010

The Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Alert Act, 2020

The Enforcement of Women’s Property Rights Act, 2020

ICT Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2020

ICT Senior Citizens Act, 2021

Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill, 2021

National Commission on the Status of Women

11. Reporting Status

- Under Article 18 of CEDAW, Pakistan submits its periodic reports to the Committee on Elimination of Discrimination against Women every four years. The reports are the outcome of an elaborate national consultative processes. The report was disseminated with other Ministries, Provincial Line Departments, civil society, academia and other stakeholders for review. In addition to this, the draft report was also publicized to the general public for feedback. The recommendations were collated and incorporated in the draft prior to submission to the Committee.
- Pakistan submitted its combined initial, second and third periodic report in 2007, and has since then regularly presented to the Committee its Periodic Reports and Responses to the Concluding Observations. Pakistan’s sixth periodic report is due in 2024.

Relevancy and Impact

12. CEDAW requires countries to eliminate discrimination against women in the public as well as the private sphere, including in the family, and recognizes that traditional gender roles and stereotypes must be eliminated in order to end all forms of discrimination against women and girls.
13. CEDAW seeks to achieve ‘substantive equality’ or ‘equality of results,’ which stresses that there should be equal access, equal opportunities, and equal results for women and girls. It entails that countries are obligated to take all necessary actions that may be required to make sure women and girls actually experience equality in their lives.

CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE (CAT)

Overview

1. Torture constitutes a direct and deliberate attack on the core of the human personality and dignity.
2. The Convention against Torture (CAT) was adopted in 1984 as a specialized human rights treaty in response to the widespread and systematic practice of torture in Latin America and other regions of the world. The Convention is based on the explicit desire of its drafters '*to make more effective the struggle against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment throughout the world.*'
3. More than thirty years after the Convention's entry into force 165 States have ratified the treaty to fight torture and other forms of ill-treatment. Pakistan became a signatory to CAT in April 2008 and ratified it in June 2010, committing itself to enact an effective legal framework preventing and criminalizing torture, and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
4. The Convention represents the most detailed international codification of standards and practices regarding the prohibition against torture.

Content and Scope of the Convention

5. Article 1 defines torture as intentional infliction of severe pain or suffering (physical or psychological) for a specific purpose, such as to obtain information, as punishment, or to intimidate, or for any reason based on discrimination by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of State authorities.
6. Article 2 -16 deal with the obligations of the States parties. These obligations may be summarized as follows:
 - Each State party shall take effective legislative, administrative, judicial or other measures to prevent acts of torture. The prohibition against torture shall be absolute and shall be upheld also in a state of war and in other exceptional circumstances.
 - No State party may expel or extradite a person to a State where there are substantial grounds for believing that he would be in danger of being subjected to torture.
 - Each State Party shall ensure that acts of torture are serious criminal offences within its legal system. Furthermore, State Parties must establish its jurisdiction over any persons

found in its territory who are alleged to have committed torture, regardless of where the alleged act was committed or the nationality or residence of the alleged perpetrator.

- Each State party shall ensure the victims of torture the right to prompt and impartial investigation, the right to complain and redress.

7. Articles 17 – 24 deal mainly with the mandate of the Committee against Torture. The Committee consists of ten experts.

States Parties are also obliged to submit an initial report within one year of the entry into force of the Convention for the individual State Party and every four years thereafter, or whenever the Committee requests them.

The Committee against Torture holds two annual sessions. At each session, the Committee examines reports from a number of States parties. Each report is examined orally in the presence of one or more representatives of the State concerned. After the examination of each report the Committee adopts its conclusions and recommendations. The Committee may also adopt general comments on specific provisions of the Convention or issues related to their implementation.

In addition to the reporting procedure, the Convention establishes three other mechanisms through which the Committee performs its monitoring functions. The Committee may also, under certain circumstances, consider individual complaints or communications from individuals claiming that their rights under the Convention have been violated, undertake inquiries, and consider inter-state complaints.

8. Articles 25-33 relate to technical matters, including the signature or ratification of the Convention, procedure for amendments, or reservations.

Domestic Implementation of CAT

9. Corresponding Constitutional Provision

Article 4	The right of individuals to be dealt with in accordance with the law.
Article 9	Right to Life, Liberty and Security of Person
Article 10	Safeguards as to Arrest and Detention
Article 10A	Right to Fair Trial
Article 14	Inviolability of the dignity of man, etc.
Article 199	Jurisdiction of the High Court (Habeas Corpus)

10. Legislation, Policies and other Measures

- The Ministry of Human Rights prepared the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention & Punishment) Bill, 2020, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, to harmonize the national legislation with the provisions of the subject Convention.

The Bill provides a comprehensive definition of torture in line with Article 1(1) of the Convention against Torture and includes both physical and psychological torture. Torture would be punishable by three to ten years in prison. The Bill provides criminal liability for public servants who have a duty to prevent the commission of torture and ‘intentionally or negligently’ fail to do so and for public servants who incite or instigate torture.

The Bill was approved by the Senate Functional Committee on Human Rights in July 2020 followed by a report presented in the Senate by the Senate Committee in February 2021. In July 2021, the Senate approved the Bill and the same has been presented before the National Assembly. If passed by Parliament, this Bill would make torture by law enforcement agencies a criminal offence for the first time.

11. Inquiry Procedure

- Pakistan on June 23, 2010 accepted the Inquiry Procedure under Article 20 of the Convention against Torture.

12. Reporting Status

- CAT Pakistan submitted its Initial Report under Article 19 of CAT in January 2016 to the Committee against Torture. This report details the commitment to upholding rights enshrined under the covenant by providing an overview of the existing constitutional, legal framework along with constraints and challenges and the implementation of specific provisions under the covenant. Pakistan is presently preparing to submit its 2nd Periodic Report.
- The reports are prepared in close coordination with relevant line ministries and departments of the Government at the national and provincial levels. A number of key stakeholders, relevant Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)/ Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), individual experts, and academia were consulted, and their contribution is sought through an inclusive and participatory approach.

Relevancy and Impact

13. As one of the most universally recognized human rights, the prohibition of torture has attained status as a *jus cogens* or peremptory norm of general international law, also giving rise to the obligation *erga omnes* (owed to and by all States) to take action against those who torture. As such, the prohibition may be enforced against a State even if it has not ratified any of the relevant treaties, and the prohibition is not subject to derogation, even in times of war or emergency.
14. The Convention has inspired new national laws, helped put in place important protection mechanisms and raised awareness about the needs and rights of victims. However, torture continues to plague all regions of the world, with devastating impacts on individuals and communities.

CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (CRC)

Overview

1. Children because of their vulnerability often need special care and protection that adults do not. Thus there is a need to place special emphasis on the primary caring and protective responsibility of the family, the need for legal and other protection of the child, the importance of respect for the cultural values of the child's community, and the vital role of international co-operation in achieving the realization of children's rights
2. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was adopted in 1989, and is the first legally binding international instrument to incorporate a comprehensive set of universally recognised norms, asserting the complementarity and interdependence of human rights. Above all, the Convention set a new vision of the child, embodying a consensus that emerged in favour of the empowerment, as well as protection, of children.
3. The CRC has three optional protocols:
 - Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in Armed Conflict (25 May 2000);
 - Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (25 May 2000);
 - Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure (19 December 2011).
4. The Convention has achieved near-universal acceptance, having now been ratified by 193 parties, including Pakistan on November 12, 1990. Pakistan has also ratified two optional protocol i.e. children in armed conflict and sale of children child prostitution and child pornography on November 17, 2016; and July 05, 2011, respectively.

Content and Scope of the Convention

5. Article 1 defines a child as a person under the age of 18, and provides a host of substantive rights to them.
6. Articles 2 – 40 sets out the civil, political, economic, social, health and cultural rights of children. They have been categorized as:
 - The Right to Survival – to life, health, nutrition, name and nationality. The right to survival entails the right to a healthy life. This means that children should be rightfully assured of adequate nutrition and quality healthcare. Their names be registered as citizens

to access state nutritional schemes. Infant and child mortality should be curtailed and malnourishment should not be a concern.

- The Right to Development – to education, care, leisure, recreation. Every child has the right to development that lets the child explore her/him full potential. To an education that not only lead the child to a path of learning but promotes understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and should contribute to maintenance of peace.
- The right to Protection – from exploitation, abuse, neglect. It entails that all children be nurtured and protected from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation in any form. It ranges from a child's right to be protected from, having to work, to face any kind of physical or mental abuse and to have a caring, secure family.
- The right to Participation – to expression, information, thought and religion. This is a right where the child is involved in the decisions take about her/his life and has the space to develop & express independent thought.

It defines the four overarching rights or ‘general principles’ that are needed for the rights in the Convention to be realized i.e. non-discrimination; best interest of child; Right to life, survival and development; and the right to be heard.

The Convention also says what governments, public authorities and adults must do to ensure all children can enjoy all their rights. It obliges State Parties to take all available measures to implement children’s rights such as incorporating the Convention or particular provisions of it into domestic law; imposing legal duties to have regard to the Convention; national strategies and action plans for children, etc. In addition to this, it also sets out duties for all public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities and legislative bodies to have the ‘best interests of the child’ as a primary consideration for all actions.

7. Articles 43 – 54 set out the implementation measures of the Convention. The Committee on the Rights of the Child oversees implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Optional Protocols through its consideration of State reports and inquiry requests, and its preparation of general comments, substantive statements, and general discussion days.

Initially, a State must present a report two years after acceding to the Convention. After the initial report, a State will submit periodic reports. The report should detail those measures the State has taken to bring its laws and administrative practices into line with the Convention. These reports form the basis of a discussion between the Committee and the State, after which the Committee issues concluding observations, in which it recognises

where the State complies, highlights areas of concern and makes recommendations for change, often drawing on the practices of other States

The Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography

8. The global concern with child exploitation led to the adoption of this Protocol.
9. Article 1 provides that “*States Parties shall prohibit the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography as provided for by the present Protocol.*”
10. Article 2 – 3 defines the conduct prohibited in the Protocol i.e. sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography and lists down acts that at a minimum must be fully covered by criminal or penal legislation of State Parties.
11. Article 4 – 7 imposes obligations on States Parties to repress these crimes. This includes issues such as extraterritorial jurisdiction, extradition, mutual legal assistance and seizure and confiscation of proceeds and instrumentalities.
12. Article 8 – 9 pertains to the protection of victims and addresses prevention of the prohibited acts. It obliges State Parties to adopt measures to protect the rights and interests of child victims of the practices prohibited under the present Protocol at all stages of the criminal justice process, and lists the provisions on the treatment to which child victims are entitled and one provision on the rights of those who work with child victims.

The Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict

13. Articles 1 – 2 obliges States to take all measures that any child i.e. who has not attained the age of 18 years do not take a direct part in hostilities or are compulsorily recruited in the armed forces.
14. Article 3 asks States to recognize special protection due to children and to ensure that any recruitment of a child in the armed forces is voluntary, with the consent of the parent/guardian. Furthermore, the States are obliged to inform recruits of their duty beforehand.
15. Article 4 states that States must take feasible measures to prevent armed groups from recruiting persons less than 18 years of age and enact strict legal measures to prohibit and criminalize such actions.
16. Article 6 provides States to take all necessary legal, administrative and other measures to ensure effective implementation and enforcement of the provisions of the Protocol, and

provide assistance for the physical and psychological recovery of children in armed conflict and ensure proper social reintegration.

Domestic Implementation of CRC and its Protocols

17. Corresponding Constitutional Provisions

Article 11	Prohibition of slavery, forced labour, etc.
Article 25	Equality of Citizens
Article 25A	Right to Education
Article 35	Protection of Family, etc.
Article 37	Promotion of social justice and eradication of social evils
Article 38	Promotion of social and economic well-being of the people

18. Legislation, Policies and other Measures

Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929
Children (Pledging of Labour) Act 1933
The Employment of Children Act 1991
Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1992
National Action Plan for Children 2006
The Child Protection and Welfare Act 2010
Juvenile Justice System Act 2018
ICT Protection of Child Act 2018
National Commission on the Rights of Children

19. Reporting Status

- Pakistan submits its reports regularly to the relevant treaty body. The reports are the outcome of an elaborate national consultative process. The report is discussed at many inter-ministerial and civil society fora with their feedback incorporated in the final document.
- The Combined 6th and 7th Periodic Reports will be submitted to the Committee in 2022.

Relevancy and Impact:

20. The CRC is a significant legal and political achievement. It elevated the child to the status of an independent rights-holder and placed children's issues at the centre of the mainstream human rights agenda.

21. It has had an undeniable impact at national level shown by changes to legislation, the creation of new programmes of policies that deal with specific concerns, the creation of national child rights institutions and coordinating mechanisms, and changes in attitude towards children.

CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (CRPD)

Overview

1. Persons with disabilities constitute a significant portion of the population worldwide, yet they remain one of the most marginalized and vulnerable populations. They face a wide-ranging human rights abuses including institutionalization, isolation, stigma and discrimination, and lack of access to health, education and employment opportunities.
2. As awareness and understanding of issues related to disability rights grew, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol in 2006 as a means of improving respect for the rights of persons with disabilities.
3. As of December 2021, 183 States have ratified to the Convention, including Pakistan on July 05, 2011.
4. The Convention seeks *to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.*
5. Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.
6. The CRPD approach to disability is called the “social model” of disability. It recognizes that the exclusion of a person with a disability from society is the result of a barrier or hindrance to the individual’s ability to participate fully, rather than the result of the individual’s inherent inability to participate.

Content and Scope of the Convention

7. Articles 1 – 4 are foundational Articles that articulate the purpose, definitions and general principles of the Convention and establish general obligations for States Parties. The Convention obliges States Parties to ensure and promote the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all persons with disabilities without discrimination of any kind on the basis of disability.

To this end, States Parties undertake to adopt all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention, modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices that constitute

discrimination against persons with disabilities; and take into account the protection and promotion of the human rights of persons with disabilities in all policies and programmes.

8. Articles 5 – 30 covers the full spectrum of human rights. It comprises a robust non-discrimination and equality framework, which applies across all its rights, civil, cultural, economic, political and social. Its substantive articles clarify the content and scope of the human rights to which all persons are entitled, as applicable to persons with disabilities. Furthermore, it identifies two categories of persons with disabilities who might be particularly vulnerable to discrimination and abuse of rights: women with disabilities and children with disabilities

The Convention also sets out a range of measures that place obligations on States to do something which is necessary to guarantee rights. These measures are not directly related to any one right in particular. They include: awareness-raising, accessibility, situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies, access to justice, personal mobility, habilitation and rehabilitation, data and statistics, and international cooperation.

9. Article 31 – 33 set forth implementation and monitoring measures. It requires State parties to collect appropriate information, including statistical and research data, to enable them to formulate and implement policies to give effect to the Convention. Furthermore, it lays down the various measures that State parties have to adopt to establish national implementation and monitoring frameworks.

10. Articles 34 – 39 establishes the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and details its institutional structure.

The primary responsibility of the Committee is to review comprehensive reports from each State Party to the Convention, and issue concluding observations and recommendations for the State Party. State Parties are obliged to submit to the Committee a report on measures taken to give effect to its obligations under the present Convention and on the progress made in that regard, within two years after the entry into force of the present Convention. After the initial report, the State party must submit subsequent reports at least every four years or whenever the Committee requests it.

11. Article 40 establishes a Conference of States Parties to meet regularly to consider any matter with regard to the Convention's implementation.

12. Article 41 – 43 sets out the procedures for signature, ratification, entry into force and other relevant requirements.

Domestic Implementation of CRPD

13. Corresponding Constitutional Provisions

Article 25	Equality of Citizens
Article 26	Non-discrimination in respect of access to Public Places
Article 27	Safeguard against discrimination in services
Article 38	Promotion of social and economic well-being of the people

14. Legislation, Policies and other Measures

The Disabled Persons (Employment and Rehabilitation) Ordinance, 1981
National Plan of Action for Persons with Disabilities, 2006
Special Citizens Act, 2008
The ICT Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2020
Ehsaas Kafaalat Policy for Special Person, 2020
Sehat Sahulat Programme
National Committee for Implementation of UNCRPD

15. Reporting Status

- Pakistan has only submitted one under Article 35 of the Convention in 2020 to the Committee. This Initial Country Report lays down the relevant policies, programs, legal and institutional measures undertaken by Pakistan to ensure human rights of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) which demonstrate commitment of the Government of Pakistan to ensuring the rights of PWDs.
- The report details that the Government devotes significant resources to ensure that PWDs in Pakistan are able to enjoy equal human rights, fundamental freedoms, and inherent dignity in accordance with the Convention and Constitution of Pakistan.
- The report was prepared in consultation with various stakeholders through detailed consultative meetings, having representative on from Federal and Provincial Departments as well as Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and Disabled People’s Organizations (DPOs).

Relevancy and Impact

16. The CRPD (2006) has been seen as a ‘paradigm shift’ in relation to how persons with disabilities are constituted in their societies and as potentially transformative in changing their lives for the better.

17. The Convention clarifies the rights of persons with disabilities. It recognizes that persons with disabilities have the same rights as everyone else and that they should enjoy them on an equal basis with people without disabilities.
18. Furthermore, it sets out responsibilities to respect those rights. It recognizes that asserting rights is not enough on its own and that it is equally important to identify the various steps that States and others should take to respect those rights.
19. The Convention recognizes disability as a social construct and society should dismantle the barriers preventing persons with disabilities from participating fully in society. It promotes inclusive and accessible development.