

Media Update

14 March 2024

UNITED NATIONS

SECRETARY-GENERAL MESSAGE

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL MESSAGE ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY TO COMBAT ISLAMOPHOBIA 15 March 2024

The International Day to Combat Islamophobia occurs at a time when we see a rising tide of anti-Muslim hate and bigotry in many parts of the world.

Institutional discrimination and other barriers are violating the human rights and dignity of Muslims. Divisive rhetoric and misrepresentation are stigmatizing communities. Online hate speech is fueling real-life violence.

Much of this disturbing trend is part of a wider pattern of attacks against religious groups and vulnerable populations, also including Jews, minority Christian communities and others.

We must confront and root out bigotry in all its forms. Leaders must condemn inflammatory discourse and safeguard religious freedom. Digital platforms must moderate hateful content and protect users from harassment. And everyone must unite to combat intolerance, stereotypes and bias.

Together, let us commit to promoting mutual respect and understanding, foster social cohesion, and build peaceful, just and inclusive societies for all.

UNDP

PRESS RELEASE

UNDP's 2023-2024 Human Development Report points to a global 'gridlock' of increased inequality and political polarization

Pakistan ranks 164th with a 'low' human development status

14 March 2024 – Islamabad: Uneven development progress is leaving the poorest behind, exacerbating inequality, and stoking political polarization on a global scale. The result is a dangerous deadlock that must be urgently tackled through collective action, says the 2023-2024 Human Development Report entitled "Breaking the Gridlock: Reimagining Cooperation in a Polarized World" released this week by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

"The widening human development gap revealed by the report shows that the two-decade trend of steadily reducing inequalities between wealthy and poor nations is now in reverse," said Achim Steiner, Administrator of UNDP. "This gridlock carries a significant human toll. The failure of collective action to advance our response to climate change, digitalization or poverty and inequality not only hinders human development but also worsens polarization and further erodes trust in people and institutions worldwide."

The 2023-2024 Report places Pakistan in the 'low' human development category. In 2022, Pakistan had a Human Development Index (HDI) value of 0.540 with a global ranking of 161 out of 192 countries. In 2023, the country dropped three places to 164 in the global ranking.

"Despite managing well the Covid-19 pandemic, Pakistan's HDI and global ranking have suffered due to persistent social, economic and political pressures, including macroeconomic challenges as well as the lingering effect of the 2022 floods," said UNDP Pakistan Resident Representative, Dr. Samuel Rizk. He observed that there is a notable 33 per cent decline in Pakistan's inequality-adjusted HDI, bringing it to 0.360. In the Gender Inequality Index (GII), the country's rank remains the same at 135 out of 166 countries. The

Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) score stays unaffected at 0.198, indicating persistent challenges.

The Report reveals that following pandemic-caused setbacks for their HDI in 2020, the South Asian region has demonstrated an overall more resilient recovery compared to East Asia and the Pacific, as well as the global average. However, significant disparities remain between ‘high’ HDI and ‘low’ HDI countries, indicating ongoing challenges in achieving equitable development.

“With a new government in place, and high ambitions for reform, prosperity for Pakistan requires significant mobilization of climate and SDGs financing, along with a fit-for-purpose governance architecture that provides planetary and digital ‘global public goods’,” said Dr. Rizk. “The role of global public goods is different from humanitarian aid and development assistance, which target certain populations in need. Global public goods, by definition, aim to reach everyone and can improve the prospect of human development of all people and societies as whole.”

The latest UNDP Human Development Report calls for reevaluating global interdependence and outlines four critical areas for action: prioritizing planetary public goods for climate stability, fostering digital global public goods for fair technology access, implementing innovative financial mechanisms for low-income countries, and adopting new governance approaches to reduce political polarization and combat misinformation.

To view the full report, visit <https://hdr.undp.org/content/human-development-report-2023-24>

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About UNDP

UNDP is the leading United Nations organization fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality, and climate change. Working with our broad network of

experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and the planet. Learn more at undp.org or follow at @UNDP.

About the Human Development Report Office

The mission of the Human Development Report Office (HDRO) is to advance human development. The goal is to contribute towards the expansion of opportunities, choice, and freedom. The office works towards this goal by promoting innovative new ideas, advocating practical policy changes, and constructively challenging policies and approaches that constrain human development. The office works with others to achieve change through writing and research, data analysis and presentation, support to national and regional analysis and outreach and advocacy work.

UNDP Human Development Report 2023/2024

“Breaking the Gridlock: Reimagining cooperation in a polarized world”

Key Findings

Global & Regional overview:

- Aggregate global Human Development Index (HDI) has declined since 2020 (the loss from Pandemic has not been recovered yet)
- Despite the setback in its HDI score in 2020, South Asia has recovered better compared to East Asia and Pacific, and the aggregate World score
- The difference between High HDI and Low HDI countries is decreasing but still sizeable at **0.38** (1 being the maximum difference and 0 being the minimum difference)
- Perceptions on democracy (based on World Values Survey) are paradoxical – in the period 2017-22 increasing number of people think positively of democracy but also positively of **leaders who undermine democracy**
- **68%** of people report that they have little influence in the decisions of their governments

- On a positive note, 69% of the world's population willing to make personal financial commitments to climate action

Human Development Index trends (Pakistan and South Asia region):

- Most regions, including South Asia, showing recovery post-pandemic, and a return to an upward trend
 - South Asia's HDI increased in 2022 after a decline in 2021
 - Exception is 'Arab States' where HDI seems to have plateaued since 2019-20
 - Arab States data also shows higher human insecurity and lack of agency amongst its populations
- South Asia's regional average of the HDI is **0.64**
 - In comparison:
 - World average is **0.74**
 - East Asia average is even better at **0.77**
 - **Pakistan's HDI value for 2022 is 0.540— which put the country in the Low human development category—positioning it at 164 out of 193 countries and territories.**
 - **Pakistan has the lowest score in expected years in schooling in the South Asia region out of nine countries (7.9 compared to regional average of 11.9)**
 - Afghanistan is the other country in the region with the lowest scores compared to regional average
- If we adjust the HDI for inequality, **Pakistan shows the most inequality in life expectancy in the region at 26.7%**
- In the **Gender Development Index (GDI)** South Asian regional average is lower than world average and East Asian average
 - South Asia: 0.86

- East Asia: 0.96
- World: 0.95
- **Gender Inequality Index (GII) 2022 data shows South Asia third most inequal region** after Sub-Saharan Africa and Arab States
 - **Pakistan has a GII value of 0.522, ranking it 135 out of 166 countries in 2022**