**National Statement by Mr. Afaq Ahmad during the 3rd UPR Review of Iceland**

**40th UPR Session**

**25 January 2022**

**Mr. President,**

We thank the delegation of Iceland for presenting its 3rd UPR report.

We welcome Iceland’s efforts to strengthen national human rights framework including in the area of racial discrimination. Enactment of equal Treatment Act of 2018 to combat discrimination in the labour market including on the basis of race, ethnicity, origin and religion is a positive development. However, we echo Treaty Bodies’ call for measures to combat discrimination in all spheres of life including in the political and socio-economic areas.

We also share CERD’s concerns over the rise in racial hatred and hate speech especially against ethnic-religious groups and people of the Muslim faith. Propagation of racial superiority in political campaigns and debates fuel violence and should be addressed.

We recommend Iceland to:

1. Continue efforts to establish an independent national human rights institution.
2. Amend penal code to include nationality, ethnicity and religion as grounds of discrimination in accordance with ICERD.
3. Combat racial discrimination including racially motivated hate crimes by amending national laws, ensuring effective investigation and prosecution of all such cases and holding perpetrators accountable.

I thank you.