**Pre-recorded video statement to be delivered in 4th HRC inter-sessional meeting on Human Rights and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

***Theme: “Investing in sustainable recovery, advancing gender equality and strengthening partnership-towards a renewed social contract anchored in human rights***”

**Duration: 2 Minutes**

The COVID-19 pandemic has unprecedented impacts of our lives. In addition to the direct impact of COVID on health and rights of people, the pandemic has deepened social and economic inequalities also.There has been an escalation in gender-based violence within households and increasing risk of child marriages etc.

The National Human Rights Commission, played a significant role in ensuring rights of women and girls during the pandemic and towards ensuring goal 5 of gender equality. The Commission has issued advisory on Rights of Women in the context of COVID-19 to the Union government, all states and UTs. In compliance with the advisory issued by the Commission, action taken report has also been called for. The Commission has registered 9415 cases of Human Rights violation against women since the beginning of COVID (21/03/2020 to 26/12/2021). It has also taken suo-moto cognizance in many of the cases pertaining to migrant women, pregnant women during the pandemic. In its core group meetings of the Commission also deliberated upon issues like **lesser women in the international forums**, **decline of women in the labour force, problems of work-life balance and Integrating Women’s Development with Nation’s Development.**

Investing in women and girls has a multiplier impact on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth, therefore, gender equality needs to be adopted in nation building. Gender equality will require equal opportunities to women inside as well as outside the homes along with women in leadership positions. Gender equality can become a reality, when both the genders work in tandem with each other, that is possible when women and girls also enhance their skill and knowledge on priority basis.

**Thank-you.**