



FOREIGN MINISTER

Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Islamabad, Pakistan

21 August 2019

Excellency,

Since our conversation of 8 August 2019, and my letter to you dated 4 August, the situation of human rights in Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJ&K) has further deteriorated.

As I had forewarned, the Indian Government took unilateral actions on 5 August 2019 aimed at altering the internationally recognized disputed status of occupied Jammu and Kashmir, changing its demographic composition and denying the right of self-determination to the people of Jammu and Kashmir as prescribed in the resolutions of the Security Council. These actions are flagrant violations of the UN Charter, relevant Security Council resolutions, international law and India's own solemn commitments.

In order to prevent a popular revolt against these illegal and unilateral actions by the Kashmiri people, India took further stringent measures resulting in a complete lockdown. It inducted an additional 180,000 troops into occupied Jammu and Kashmir, supplementing the 700,000 already stationed in the region, which is already the world's most militarized zone. Tourists and visitors were externed; an annual Hindu pilgrimage cancelled; a complete round-the-clock curfew imposed; all communications – telephones, both landlines and cellular, internet connections – cut off; Kashmiri political leaders arrested or detained; and hospitals advised to prepare for “emergencies”.

These measures remain in place.

Since 5 August, reportedly an additional 6,000 people including political leaders, professionals and activists have been arrested. Many of Kashmir's prominent leaders have been transported to jails in New Delhi and other parts of India. There are reports of the abduction of young boys from their homes by Indian security forces and they being subjected to torture, inhuman and degrading treatment. Several peaceful demonstrations have been suppressed by extreme force, including the use of pellet guns, killing unarmed demonstrators and injuring or maiming others. Free movement remains banned.

Muslim Kashmiris were prevented from performing their religious obligations, including offering Eid ul Adha prayers in large congregations. In lockdown, Kashmiris are unable to access hospitals, medicines and food supplies.

An iron curtain has descended over occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The occupied territory been transformed into a giant open air prison.

At this critical moment, it is vital for all those committed to the preservation and promotion of human rights to come to the defence of the hapless people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

The United Nations has a special responsibility to do so. These violations of human rights are taking place in a territory recognized by the United Nations Security Council as disputed; the resolutions of the Security Council regarding the final disposition of Jammu and Kashmir are being violated, aimed at denying the right of self-determination to the people of Jammu and Kashmir; these violations are grave and consistent, as attested by your own Reports of June 2018 and July 2019.

There is a real danger that these violations will be further intensified and may take the form of ethnic cleansing and genocide to transform occupied Jammu and Kashmir from a Muslim-majority to a Hindu-majority State.

We have welcomed the concern expressed by the UN Secretary General on 8 August 2019 on these developments and his reaffirmation that the position of the United Nations on the Jammu and Kashmir issue is based on the UN Charter and resolutions of the Security Council. I hope Your Excellency would add your powerful voice to that of the Secretary General, several States, human rights organizations and others who have expressed concern regarding the grave human rights situation in Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Consistent with the UN Charter, Security Council resolutions, and human rights and international law, the international community should demand that:

One, India rescind its unilateral actions and reiterate its commitment to abide by the relevant UN Security Council resolutions;

Two, provide solemn assurances that it will not allow non-Kashmiris to acquire property or residency in Jammu and Kashmir (to change its demographic composition);

Three, halt its human rights violations in occupied Jammu and Kashmir, including the use of force against peaceful demonstrators, especially the use of pellet guns, lift the curfew, allow peaceful assembly and freedom

of expression, release the political prisoners, activists and abducted youth, rescind its draconian emergency laws, and withdraw the heavy military presence from Kashmiri cities, towns and villages;

Four, provide unhindered access to occupied Jammu and Kashmir to human rights organizations and international media to ascertain and report on the situation in the occupied territory; and

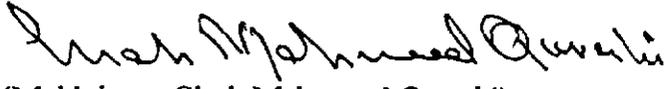
Five, accept the recommendations in your Reports of 2018 and 2019 for the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry under UN auspices to investigate the gross and systematic violations of human rights in occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Your voice, Excellency, and that of the international community, including the Human Rights Council, will offer the people of Jammu and Kashmir a ray of hope that their plight and suffering under brutal occupation will find ultimate redress. Without hope, there will be no alternative for them but to resist ongoing repression and military occupation. This will in turn evoke massive suppression by India, escalate human rights violations, even ethnic cleansing and genocide in occupied Jammu and Kashmir, creating the inherent danger of another conflict between Pakistan and India. These are outcomes which we in Pakistan and the entire world would wish to avoid.

None of us can afford to remain silent in the face of such human rights abuses, unilateral actions that violate relevant UN Security Council resolutions, denial of the inalienable right of self-determination to the people in occupied territory and the threat that these unlawful actions could pose to international peace and security.

I look forward to your support and efforts to end the massive violations of human rights in Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

  
(Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi)

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