



National Statement during
General Debate Item 8

51st Human Rights Council Session

30 September 2022

Mr. President,

The Vienna Declaration and Program of Action (VDPA) encapsulates humanity's aspirations to advance human rights, dignity and fundamental freedoms. VDPA provides universal standards to aspire and follow for ensuring an equitable level of human rights for all peoples including enjoyment of right to self-determination, socio-economic development, freedom of expression and opinion and protection against racism, violence and discrimination.

While reaffirming its call for realization of all fundamental rights, it was explicit that denial of the right of self-determination is a violation of human rights.

Even though the 'Vienna Spirit' defines human rights as indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, however, over the decades, that very spirit and obligations have been brutally tattered and crushed by the Indian occupying forces in the Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir.

Despite being a UN recognized disputed territory, India is bringing about a massive demographic change in the region by settling non-Kashmiris in Kashmir and aspiring to convert the Muslim majority into a minority.

Although, Indian brutalities span over seven decades, however, during the last three years, India has amplified the worst form of suppression of the resilient Kashmiri people. Rights of the indigenous Kashmiris including women, children, elderly and the disabled have been trampled upon with a brazen façade of impunity.

The Hindutva regime has obviated the right of the Kashmiris to development and attain socioeconomic progress. The territory has been under the worst form of curfews and social



restrictions. How can the millions residing in Jammu & Kashmir prosper economically and attain development under such claustrophobic conditions?

For the past three years, Jammu and Kashmir had been under the world's longest military siege, woefully, that siege was further accentuated by imposing a digital curtain over the valley that has cut off the people from the world, thereby restricting their access to e-commerce and digital platforms – a basic human right that the rest of India enjoys and flaunts its benefits as India's own 'digital revolution'.

Mr. President,

Today, the entire global community is working together to find solutions to ameliorate the negative social, psychological, physical health and economic impacts of the lockdowns imposed due to the Covid-19 pandemic – at this juncture, we would like to draw the attention of this Council to the continuous and unrelenting lockdowns that the Kashmiri people have been facing since 05 August 2019. This Council must take cognizance of the inhumane treatment that been meted out to the Kashmiris and call upon India to allow the Kashmiris their basic rights as enshrined in the Vienna Declaration, in particular their right to self-determination.

I thank you!