



**National statement, delivered by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi, Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the UN, during General Debate under Agenda Item-3, at the 46<sup>th</sup> Human Rights Council Session**

**(08 March 2021)**

**Madam President,**

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights stipulates “equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family are foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world”.

The HRC is mandated to promote and protect all human rights for the cause of freedom, justice and peace.

Right to self-determination is at the core all human rights. Article 1(2) and Article 55 of the UN Charter frame this right in the context of promoting peace & security and socio-economic progress.

The people of Jammu and Kashmir were promised the right to self-determination by numerous UN Security Council resolutions and by India itself. For the past 7 decades, India continues to deny this right, defy international law and hinder the security and prosperity of South Asia and its people.

Since August 2019, India has usurped every right and freedom of the Kashmiri people through draconian laws and instrumentalization of state terrorism against the Kashmiris.

India continues to trample upon civil and political rights of Kashmiris. India's handpicked Lieutenant Governor and 900,000 military personnel rule with impunity in the occupied territory, by stifling free speech, assembly, association and by branding any dissent as “terrorism”.

India continues to deprive the Kashmiris their economic, social and cultural rights. The extremist BJP-RSS ideologues in New Delhi are systematically marginalizing the majority Kashmiri community.

In a demographic engineering of biblical proportion, around 3.5 million Indians have been given Kashmiri citizenship within few months. This number continues to increase as we speak.

Indian entities, including Army are procuring large chunks of lands, dispossessing indigenous Kashmiris of their properties and livelihoods.

Under preferential contracts and through aggressive mining, the exploitative Indian companies are now ravaging the fragile ecosystem of the Jhelum River Valley in the occupied territory.



Kashmiri civilians calling out India for its atrocities are neutralized by extrajudicial killings, arrests and imprisonments. Collective punishment in the form of house demolitions in the so-called cordon and search operations remains pervasive.

In a witch-hunt for so called militants, youth are killed and buried at unmarked graves, leaving the grieving fathers like Mushtaq Ahmed Wani of Pulwama to suffer in pain and anguish.

The UN Special Procedures, civil society and independent media continue to report India's state oppression in Jammu and Kashmir. The UN Experts have rightly described Indian HR violations as "unprecedented" and "collective punishment". Other Independent Experts have affirmed "Indian illegal actions are aimed at transforming the Kashmiri majority into a minority" unquote.

This situation in occupied Jammu and Kashmir by any yardstick constitutes a human rights crisis on which the Council and OHCHR cannot remain silent. At a minimum, the Kashmir reporting process must continue.

We call upon the Council to implement OHCHR recommendations made to it.

This Council and the OHCHR must act to uphold Kashmir's cause of freedom, justice and peace.

Thank you.