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## Issue Brief

# Fresh Hopes for Resolution of Kashmir Dispute

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On August 29, 2016, newly elected President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Muhammad Masood Khan presented a six-point proposal for the success of the Kashmir struggle. The proposal includes;

1. Reinforce unity and harmony within AJK and strengthening of coordination with Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK) Pro-freedom leadership
2. Highlight Kashmir issue through Kashmiri and Pakistanis Diaspora in North America, Europe and Gulf States
3. Take up the issue of Human Rights violations with US, Congress and the European Parliament
4. Demand implementation of UN Resolutions in United Nations, Human Rights Council and other international institutions.
5. Urge United Nations to appoint a special representative for monitoring situation in IOK
6. Demand India to resume dialogue with Pakistan. Indian political and civil society will be appealed to prevail upon their government to stop human rights violations in IOK.

Earlier on August 26, Prime Minister (PM) Nawaz Sharif also nominated twenty two parliamentarians as special envoys to highlight the Indian atrocities in IOK in key capitals of the world. Such moves indicate that Pakistan has now actively started lobbying for the Kashmir dispute globally with a proactive diplomacy. Time is one of the crucial elements of effective diplomacy. A diplomatic act, executed at the wrong time can be disastrous; however, given the recent situation in IOK, this is the right time to demand for peace and justice in IOK.

Given the current situation in IOK, the diplomatic initiative and Masood Khan's six- point proposal provides a timely roadmap for the resolution of Kashmir dispute and success of the Kashmir struggle.

It is best to focus on countering the anti-Pakistan propaganda vis-à-vis sponsoring terrorism and highlight the Indian brutalities across the globe.

Masood Khan's proposal embraces a new proactive approach to find a solution for the Kashmir dispute. Harmony and solidarity within a society is crucial not only for the success and development of that society but also conflict resolution. Harmony and unity are the primeval values of conflict resolution models. The Chinese consider harmony and unity as the universal path which all should pursue. Only when harmony and solidarity is reached and prevails, can all things be nourished and flourish. Therefore, unity and harmony among the parties in AJK to raise the Kashmir dispute effectively can yield successful results. Joint coordinated efforts by the Hurriyat leadership and AJK is the need of the hour.

In recent years, the focus on Kashmiri and Pakistani Diasporas has shifted towards their role as possible facilitators in peace talks. Henceforth, as suggested, Kashmiri and Pakistani Diaspora community can offer the mediation process a highly desirable combination of locally derived knowledge and internationally obtained contacts and skills.

In accordance with the UN resolutions and human rights treaties and conventions, forcefully raising the issue of gross human rights violations in IOK at all international forums, including the United Nations, Congress, European Parliament, Human Rights Council, and other international organisations will impinge upon India to prevent violations and atrocities in IOK. However, special procedures and urgent appeals would be required in this regard. Such proactive efforts can push United Nations, its regional and sub-regional partners, to improve their collective ability to prevent effectively and respond to future risks of such serious violations and respect and ensure the implementation of UN resolutions.

Dialogue is essential to resolve the Kashmir dispute. Dialogue not only facilitates to recover from crisis, but also helps to avert violent conflicts. Pakistan is keen to resolve the Kashmir dispute through dialogue. On August 30, the US Secretary of State, John Kerry maintained US long-standing policy of encouraging and advocating the India-Pakistan dialogue to address of difference over Kashmir.<sup>1</sup>

Public opinion in favor of dialogue is absolute. Getting India to the table is only possible if it feels pressure from the Indian civil society to negotiate. Public opinion is best mobilised by people respected by the public, with credible backgrounds and moral authority, therefore, the importance of Indian civil society is rightly identified in this proposal.

Setting of diplomatic initiative and proposal by President Masood Khan suggests that Kashmiris should not give up their hopes for the resolution of Kashmir dispute. Initiatives taken and progress made since July 8, 2016 shows that Pakistan and AJK are now moving at a greater pace to present the Kashmir cause proactively and effectively. Solution for the liberation of IOK from Indian suppression lies within the ambit provided by PM Nawaz Sharif and President Masood Khan. Henceforth, Pakistan and AJK should continue to effectively highlight the Kashmir dispute.

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<sup>1</sup> "United States to urge India for holding talks with Pakistan," DAWN, August 31, 2016