



**INSTITUTE OF
STRATEGIC STUDIES**

web: www.issi.org.pk
phone: +92-51-9204423, 24
fax: +92-51-9204658

*Report – In-House Meeting
with*
**“OIC Special Envoy for Jammu and
Kashmir”**

March 3, 2020



Rapporteur: Mahwish Hafeez

Edited by: Najam Rafique

The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) hosted an In-House Meeting with a six-member delegation from Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on March 3, 2020. The delegation was led by Ambassador Yousef Aldobeay, Assistance Secretary General for Political Affairs and the OIC Special Envoy for Jammu and Kashmir. Other members of the delegation included: Mr. Ahmed Sareer (Director Asian Affairs, Political Affairs Department), Mr. Faisal Abro (Professional Officer, Political Affairs Department), Ms. Aida Toumi (Professional Officer, Political Affairs Department), Ms. Rana Al Deghtaiter (Professional Officer, Humanitarian Affairs Department), Mr. Inamullah Khan (Representative of IsDB in Pakistan).

Ambassador Rizwan Saeed Sheikh, Pakistan's Permanent Representative to OIC, Mr. Tariq Karim, Director General (EC&OIC) and Mr. Muhammad Moazzam Ali Sahito, Assistant Director (OIC) were also present at the occasion.

Director General ISSI, Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry extended a warm welcome to the delegation. Appraising the delegation regarding Pakistan's perspective on global and regional situation, the Director General said that the world is changing rapidly. US is now more focused on Asia and there is a competition between US and China. In this competition, US has chosen India as a counterweight to China which in turn has emboldened India to adopt a more assertive policy in the region. Modi's regime is now trying to create a new Hindu Rashtra which has created a sense of panic among the minorities, specially Muslims. This ideology of Modi administration comes from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) whose leader Golwalkar believed that only Hindus have the right to live in India and all others have either to leave India or change their religion. He said that when President Trump was visiting India, Delhi was witnessing one of the worst riots. Pakistan believes that these developments in India are not good for the region, and therefore, has taken a number of initiatives like opening of the Kartarpur Corridor to enable people from Sikh faith to visit their holy places in Pakistan. Pakistan at the same time is worried about Kashmir. It has been six months that the Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir is under continuous lockdown and information blackout. It is indeed encouraging that the world conscience has finally awakened, and today, more and more voices can be heard in favor of the indigenous struggle of the Kashmiri people. Not only the international community and international media are raising this issue, but now voices can also be heard from within

India. He appreciated the support extended by the OIC on numerous occasions for resolution of the Kashmir issue according to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). He also expressed his apprehensions that India is trying to convert Muslim majority status of Kashmiris into a minority.

On the western front, Pakistan shares its border with Afghanistan which has been embroiled in conflict for the past 40 years. There is some good news now, but there is still a long way to go. Iran is also Pakistan's very important neighbor. Pakistan feels that differences between Iran and Saudi Arabia should be amicably solved because both these countries are important for Pakistan. China is also Pakistan's very important neighbor, but at the same time Pakistan also wishes to maintain cordial relations with the US.

The introduction by Ambassador Chaudhry was followed by brief presentations by ISSI research fellows.

Ms. Shahroo Malik, Research Fellow, ISSI gave a brief introduction on the functions of ISSI.

Mr. Asad Ullah Khan, Research Fellow, ISSI briefed the delegation on human rights violation in Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir. He said that Kashmir is an unfinished agenda of the partition plan in 1947. India's move on August 5, 2019 has further complicated the situation. There has been continuous lockdown and communication blackout. He also highlighted the fact that the entire Kashmiri political leadership has been detained by Indian authorities since August 2019.

Mr. Majid Mahmood, Research Associate, ISSI also presented his views on "OIC at 50", highlighting its achievements as an organization and the challenges it faces. He said that there are several things which go to the credit of OIC like promoting Islamic financing, scientific and technological cooperation, dialogue and outreach, and promoting economic and trade linkages. But, at the same time, there are certain limitations also like limited role in conflict resolution among member states or weakness in collective action on the political front. He also highlighted that Pakistan was one of OIC's founding members in 1969 and is a leading voice of Muslim unity. He said that though OIC was at the forefront of condemning Indian action of August 5, 2019, but Muslims across the world desire a strong collective action on all political fronts.

Ambassador Yousef Aldobeay expressed his pleasure for being at ISSI and said that OIC is inducting youth from various countries, as it believes that the youth will take the message of the organization for many years to come. He also suggested that ISSI should arrange short courses for students from OIC. He emphasized that OIC wishes that the resolution of the Kashmir issue is peaceful and through dialogue. The importance OIC gives to the issue of Jammu and Kashmir can be gauged by the fact that OIC held a special meeting on August 6, 2019 - the very next day after India announced revocation of Article 370 and 35 A. He said that the issue of Jammu and Kashmir and Palestine are at the top of the organization's agenda, and reaffirmed OIC's support for the Kashmir cause. He said that OIC had been the voice of the Ummah and will continue to be one.

Concluding the meeting, Chairman BoG ISSI, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood said that the delegation's visit is a testament of OIC's strong commitment to the cause of Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan appreciates OIC's support on Kashmir and which does not limit itself to passing resolutions, but has also created a Contact Group on Kashmir and appointed a special envoy on Kashmir

PICTURES OF THE EVENT



