



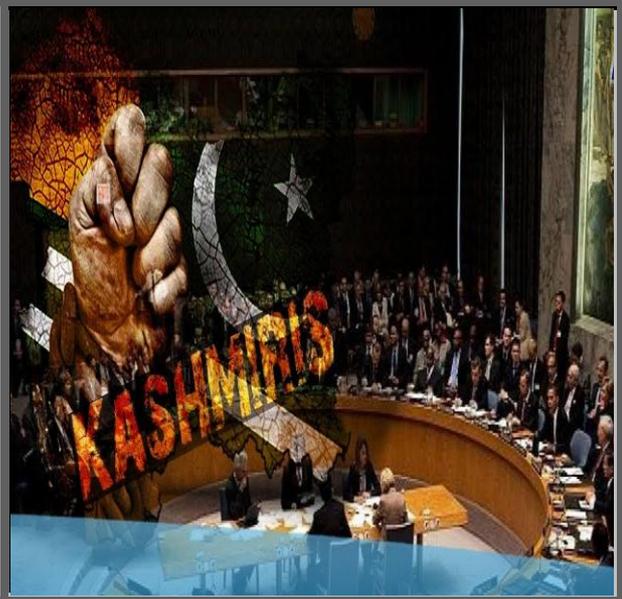
KASHMIR FINDS A VOICE AT UNSC ONCE AGAIN

By
Asad Ullah Khan
Research Fellow

Edited by
Najam Rafique

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(Views expressed in the brief are those of the author, and do not represent those of ISSI)



For the second time during past six months, United Nations Security Council deliberated on the Kashmir issue at its forum. The recent meeting was held on January 15, 2020, attended by 15 member countries. The members were briefed about the situation inside IoK including the political detentions and communication restrictions.

Earlier, the UNSC met on August 16, 2019 following the abrogation of Article 370 concerning the special status of Indian Occupied Kashmir (IoK).

The Kashmir issue was raised in the second UNSC meeting on grounds of growing Indian atrocities in the occupied territory. The second UNSC meeting on the issue points to increasing concern by the international community over the current situation in IoK. The urgency shown by the UNSC since the Indian actions of August 2019 make it clear that the nature of the dispute is not bilateral and requires international intervention. It must be noted that in 1948 it was India which first approached to the United Nations and asked it to play a meaningful role in resolution of the conflict in peaceful manner. Consequently, UNSC passed several resolutions outlining a solution and its implementation framework. There are total 18 UNSC resolutions passed on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir with the first resolution passed in January 17, 1948 and the last one passed on December 21, 1971.¹ The most

¹ UN Security Council Report
https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un_documents_type/security-council-resolutions/page/1?ctype=Jammu+and+Kashmir&cbtype=jammu-and-kashmir#038;cbtype=jammu-and-kashmir

important one is Resolution 47 of April 21, 1948 which actually proposed a solution to the dispute through plebiscite.²

At the recent closed door session, the United Nation's Military Observers Group for India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) briefed the Council on the post August 5, 2019 situation in the region which has raised the tensions between India and Pakistan. The briefing by the UNMOGIP and the Department of Political and Peace Building Affairs of United Nations clearly pointed out the detention of Kashmiri political leader and the communication blockade still in place.³

China's Permanent Representative to UN, Ambassador Zhang Jun, stressed upon the fact that the escalation of conflict between Pakistan and India is not in favour of regional peace. According to Ambassador Zhang Jun, "... the meeting will be a help in both parties to understand the risk of further escalation and encourage them to approach to each other and to have dialogue and to seek means to seek solutions through dialogue."⁴ It is pertinent to note here that China has already rejected the Indian move of creating the Indian occupied Kashmir and Ladakh as its Union Territories because of long standing territorial dispute between India and China in that region.

This was not the first time that the UN expressed concern over the situation in Kashmir. Earlier, in August 2019, UN Secretary General António Guterres said, he was "concerned over reports of restrictions on the Indian-side of Kashmir, which could exacerbate the human rights situation in the region", and called on "all parties to refrain from taking steps that could affect the status of Jammu and Kashmir."⁵ Currently, the ground situation in Kashmir is extremely miserable with human rights violations by Indian forces beyond limits. Around 8 million people are under strict curfew since August 5, 2019, which makes it the most prolonged curfew in the world.⁶ Signs of holocaust are visible as killing, torture, rape and detention of common citizens are increasing day by day. The main aim of Modi's India is now clear - undertake ethnic cleansing and genocide in IoK to lay the grounds for building a Hindu majority.

Ms. Aisha Farooqi, spokesperson of Pakistan's Foreign Office commenting on the recent discussions held at the UNSC, stated that, "continued international scrutiny would pressure the Modi

² UNSC Resolution 47 of 1948
https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_47.pdf

³ Transcript of the Press Briefing by Spokesperson, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Islamabad, January 16, 2020
<http://mofa.gov.pk/transcript-of-the-press-briefing-by-spokesperson-on-thursday-16-january-2020/>

⁴ UN Security Council discusses Kashmir, China urges India and Pakistan to ease tensions, *UN News*, August 16, 2019. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/08/1044401>

⁵ Guterres appeals for 'maximum restraint' over Jammu and Kashmir, as tensions rise, *UN News*
<https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/08/1043961>

⁶ Occupied Kashmir remains under siege, *DAWN*, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1508961>

government to reverse its unilateral measures and end human rights abuses, ceasefire violations and threats against Pakistan." She further said, "the move by China had reaffirmed that Jammu and Kashmir was an internationally recognized dispute and it must be finally settled in accordance with relevant UN Security Council resolutions and popular aspirations of the Kashmiri people."⁷

The delaying tactics used by India with regard to implementation of the UNSC resolutions is directly related to the Indian aims and ambitions of bringing demographic changes in the Indian Occupied Kashmir. India by diverting international attention is trying to get Hindus from other parts of India to settle down in the valley of Indian occupied Kashmir so that Muslim majority areas of Indian occupied Kashmir can be converted to Hindu majority areas. The revocation of article 35A and article 370 clearly shows the violations of UNSC resolutions on Kashmir. In fact, India increased its number of troops to 900,000 to impose a strict curfew in the Indian occupied Kashmir.⁸

Meanwhile, France suggested during the meeting that the Kashmir dispute is a bilateral dispute between Pakistan and India and should not be discussed in the UNSC closed door session. However, it is pertinent to note here that this is not the first time that the issue has been discussed under the mandate of UNSC. From almost past seven decades, the issue of Indian occupied Kashmir has been discussed in the UNSC meetings which generically makes it an internationally recognised dispute having security implications for the regional peace and stability

Considering India as a potential economic market for Europe, one may argue that some states are taking side of India for their economic benefits and ignoring the atrocities being committed by it in IOK. But at the same time, Pakistan enjoys support of many countries like China and Turkey who are keenly observing the human rights situation on ground in Indian Occupied Kashmir. However, India's economic market attracts investors from across Western countries. Similarly India through effective lobbying has convinced few states not to raise the issue of Kashmir, which is a criminal negligence on the part of such states. Pakistan has been up-dating international community about the ground realities with the hope that the international community will take appropriate measures to protect the abuse of humanity in IOK.

⁷ Transcript of the Press Briefing by Spokesperson, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Islamabad, January 16, 2020 <http://mofa.gov.pk/transcript-of-the-press-briefing-by-spokesperson-on-thursday-16-january-2020/>

⁸ Kashmir under lockdown: All the latest updates, *Al Jazeera*, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/08/india-revokes-kashmir-special-status-latest-updates-190806134011673.html>