



National Statement, delivered by Amb. Zaman Mehdi, Deputy Permanent Representative, during General Debate under Agenda Item-3
52nd Session
17 March 2023

Mr. President,

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

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

One of the core principles which guarantees peoples’ enjoyment of all other human rights is the Right to self-determination. Article 1(2) and Article 55 of the UN Charter frame this right in promoting peace & security and socio-economic progress.

Mr. President,

The UN Security Council, through its resolutions, had committed to the people of Jammu & Kashmir this inalienable right through various resolutions. India had also promised to realize this basic human right; however, it has brazenly reneged on this international commitment with blanket impunity and clearly violated its obligation under Article 25 of the UN Charter to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council.

For over seven decades, the Kashmiris have been denied this right in utter defiance of international law.

The colonization project of the disputed territory of Occupied Jammu & Kashmir has been accelerated and under reinforced illegal cover since August 2019.

Since the execution of these unilateral and illegal steps, India has tried to usurp every right and freedom of the Kashmiri people by applying its draconian laws and instrumentalizing state terrorism against the Kashmiris.

More than 900,000 military personnel perpetuate violence through torture, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, internet shutdowns, and curfews.



Dissent, in any form, is not tolerated, free speech is stifled, freedom of assembly and association, and those who dare to raise their voice are detained under the spurious charges of terrorism.

In this series of illegal measures, the demographic engineering project has assumed enormous proportions, with over 4.4 million Indians awarded Kashmiri citizenship. This number continues to grow yearly, contravening the stipulations of the UNSC resolutions.

Mr. President,

The UN Special Procedures, civil society, and independent media have unearthed India's state oppression in Jammu and Kashmir. Various independent experts have aptly underscored that Indian human rights violations are "unprecedented" and amount to "collective punishment".

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.

As the premier global human rights body, this Council and the OHCHR must act to uphold Kashmiris' cause of freedom, justice, and rights. They must press upon India to cease and reverse its illegal actions since August 2019 and respect the basic rights of the Kashmiris, especially their inalienable right to self-determination.

We urge the OHCHR to continue monitoring the situation in occupied Kashmir and present an updated Kashmir Report.

All members of this Council, especially those at the vanguard of the human rights agenda, must break their conspicuous silence and support the recommendations in the two Kashmir Reports.

Thank you.