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**Remarks by Pakistan during the Interactive Dialogue with ASG
on reprisals**

(42nd Session of Human Rights Council)

19 September 2019

Mr. President,

Engagement of civil society and human rights defenders with the UN human rights mechanisms is important for the realization of human rights agenda. Reprisal attacks against those who cooperate with the UN must be dealt seriously and effectively.

2. We have witnessed a worrying trend of severe life threatening reprisals in Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IoJK). They are facing regular harassment, intimidation and persecution.

3. Post 5th August, India has clamped down internet and telecommunication services in IoJK, criticized by the High Commissioner and the Special Procedures. This Indian ploy is aimed at stopping any information of human rights abuses from reaching UN mechanisms. Credible civil society organizations and media have shared alarming reports of Kashmiris especially women human rights defenders being detained, tortured, harassed and even stopped from attending this Human Rights Council session.

4. The cold blooded assassination of respectful Kashmiri journalist Shujaat Bukhari in IOK, after he tweeted in favour of the publication of the first OHCHR Kashmir report is a gruesome example of reprisal attacks. A number of media reports such as ‘The New York Times’ story titled, “Inside India’s Crackdown on Kashmir –The Dispatch”, explain

the suffocating atmosphere in which common Kashmiris live in IOK, fearful of speaking to media/ journalists because of fear of reprisals.

4. OHCHR Kashmir Reports give a detailed account of abuses against human rights defenders and journalists in IOK. It has noted that “Foreign journalists are also not spared from bringing attention to the human rights violations and obstruction/intimidation of authorities in IOK”. The report referred to cases of human rights defenders who were stopped from attending the HRC session.

5. The Secretary General in his report on cooperation with the United Nations and its mechanisms gives a detailed picture referring to cases of Mr. Thirumurugan Gandhi, Amnesty International India, Greenpeace India, Mr. Nobokishore Urikhimbam etc.

6. We urge the ASG to take notice of the grave situation of reprisals in IoJK. We also request him to share update on cases of reprisals that may have come to his attention.

I thank you.