



National Statement, delivered by Mr. Umair Khalid, Third Secretary, during General Debate under Agenda Item 8: Follow-up to and Implementation of Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action at the 49th session of Human Rights Council

25 March 2022

Mr. President,

We believe that meaningful adherence to our collective commitments, made in VDPA, is imperative to advance global human rights agenda.

This milestone document has specifically called on international community to extend legal protection and support to the occupied people engaged in legitimate struggle for self-determination. Despite these clear provisions, the grim reality is that powerful States continue to shield occupation regimes from global accountability due to strategic interests.

The growing human rights crisis in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir exemplifies this dangerous trend.

During the last two years and an half, India-the occupying Power-has taken a series of unlawful actions to colonize the occupied territory in willful subversion of the UN Charter, UNSC resolutions, and international law.

In doing so, the Hindutva Raj has trampled upon every basic human right and freedom of Kashmiri people. From summary executions to massive illegal arrests, from custodial torture to reprisal attacks against civil society actors, the list of India's gross and systematic violations of Kashmiri rights is long and growing.

The occupation regime has also disenfranchised the Kashmiri people of their basic right to freely pursue their socio-economic and cultural development. The occupation regime is doling out lands, properties and natural resources to Indian entities, almost free of cost. Under dubious laws, illegal land grab by Indian colonial forces is also on the rise.

In order to disenfranchise Kashmiri people of their religious and cultural identity, India has changed the status of Urdu and Kashmiri languages associated with them, and plan to raze down their religious sites and worship places.

This systematic and wholesale attack on fundamental rights, dignity and identity of Kashmiri people is a precursor to ethnic cleansing. The Genocide Watch has already sounded the alarm bell that the initial stages of genocide have been advanced in the occupied territory.

It is therefore imperative that the Council, and its member and observer States must respond credibly to these early warning signs, in line with their international obligations and commitments.



We, therefore, urge the Council, the High Commissioner and UN Special Procedures to call on India to reverse its illegal actions in occupied Kashmir, fully respect and uphold fundamental rights of the Kashmiri people, in particular their inalienable right to self-determination, and accept an UN-led Commission of Inquiry. Thank you.