



Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN **Geneva**

Statement

43RD SESSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

General Debate under Agenda Item 8: Follow-up to and Implementation of Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action

Statement by Pakistan
(16 June 2020)

Madam President,

The Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action (VDPA) presents a significant milestone in our collective efforts on the human rights front.

Guided by historical evidence, the Declaration rightly recognizes that foreign occupation results in serious obstacles for enjoyment of fundamental rights and freedoms. It, therefore, calls on effective realization of the inalienable right to self-determination.

Yet, after 26 years of VDPA's adoption, people, living in internationally recognized situations of foreign occupation, continue to bear multiple and pernicious assaults on their human dignity and rights.

The people's struggle for their right to self-determination in Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir, which was promised to them by the UNSC, seven decades ago, signifies one such distressing situation.

Madam President,

As a result of India's unlawful and unilateral actions last August, the level of assault on Kashmiri people's rights and freedoms has reached new heights. Apart from being the most militarized zone, IOJ&K has been subjected to the world's largest lockdown, through brute use of force, and through willful disregard of the international law.

The Kashmiris have been the victims of the worst form of collective punishment, which the contemporary world is witnessing.

The COVID situation has been shamelessly exploited by India to accelerate the pace of its expansionist agenda in IOJ&K, and gobble up Kashmiri people's livelihoods, lands and properties.

India has illegally changed 'domicile rules' in IOJ&K; allocated free lands to alien Hindu businessmen; doled out mining leases to foreign business enterprises; and chalked plans to build 'settler colonies'.



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In enforcing these unlawful measures, nearly a million Indian occupation troops are using brute and indiscriminate force against unarmed civilians with full impunity. They have resorted to extra-judicial killing, torture, and destruction of people's houses and properties during fake encounters for silencing local dissent.

Madam President,

India's designs are clear before the international community i.e.: alter the demographic composition of the occupied territory so that the indigenous Kashmiri people cannot exercise their inalienable right to self-determination.

Given these fundamental changes, Pakistan reiterates its call for close monitoring and continued reporting of the situation in the occupied territory by the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

We also appeal to this Council to choose right side of the history, break free from chains of geo-political and economic interests and call out India for its well-documented human rights abuses against Kashmiri people.

I thank you.