



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

### **National statement, delivered by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi, Pakistan Permanent Representative to the UN, during the Interactive Dialogue with UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples at 45<sup>th</sup> session of Human Rights Council**

**(25 September 2020)**

**Madam President,**

We welcome the new Special Rapporteur Mr. Francisco C. Tzay and thank the outgoing SR Ms. Victoria Tauli Corpuz for her insightful reflections.

We also welcome her special emphasis on consultations with and consent of the indigenous people for realization of their right to self-determination.

The indigenous people continue to be denied the right to self-determination and the case of indigenous Kashmiri people is a clear and contemporary example of this unlawfulness.

The usurpation of this right by India 70 years ago was once again demonstrated through illegal and unilateral actions of 5 August 2019. These actions were taken without the consent of the Kashmiri people and enforced through physical, digital, political and economic lockdown.

Over the last 13 months and using COVID-19 as a smokescreen, India has systematically robbed the indigenous Kashmiri people of their distinct religious and cultural identity as well as their natural resources, lands, and livelihoods.

In a willful defiance of UN Security Council resolutions and international law, India is changing the demographic structure of the occupied territory, by granting hundreds of thousands of Kashmiri residency to non-Kashmiris.

Such illegal steps are designed to transform the indigenous Kashmiri majority into a minority in their ancestral land and to deprive them from exercising their inalienable right to self-determination.

Framing its colonial project in occupied Jammu and Kashmir as a development strategy, India has unlawfully allocated 6,000 acres land for Indian Hindu businessmen and investors, and doled out 200 blocks of land along River Jhelum to India-based mining companies. The mining leases were awarded despite clear warnings by local authorities about the environmental risks involved.



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The Kashmir Chamber of Commerce & Industry has estimated a loss of USD 5.3 billion to the local economy and half a million jobs, between August 2019 to June 2020, due to India's military siege.

We urge the new Rapporteur to pay close attention and report to this Council on these systematic and continuing violations of the rights of indigenous Kashmiri people in IIOJ&K.

I thank you.