



Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN

Geneva

National statement, delivered by Ambassador Tahir Hussain Andrabi, Deputy Permanent Representative, during the Interactive Dialogue with Working Group on Enforced Disappearances at the 45th session of Human Rights Council

(21 September 2020)

Madam President,

We thank the Working Group for acknowledging our cooperation with the mandate in the Report, and assure it of our continued constructive engagement.

Pakistan values the Group's work in promoting and protecting fundamental human rights and freedoms in its mandated areas.

As a parliamentary democracy, with free media, independent judiciary and vibrant civil society, Pakistan is committed to upholding domestic human rights and meeting its international obligations.

Various institutional and administrative measures are in place in Pakistan to eliminate enforced or involuntary disappearances.

An independent Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearance is investigating alleged cases and providing remedy.

The Federal Cabinet has constituted a Committee, comprising Ministers of Law & Justice and Human Rights, among others, to review the status of alleged cases and evolve recommendations.

The marked decline in new cases of enforced disappearance in the last few years is a concrete evidence of Pakistan's commitment and efforts to uphold rights and freedoms of its citizens.

Pakistan echoes the Working Group's serious concerns about hundreds of pending cases of enforced disappearance in IIOJ&K and the presence of unmarked, mass graves.

After unlawful and unilateral measures of 05th August 2019, the scale and magnitude of forced disappearance has further increased.

Fate of hundreds of abducted Kashmiri civilians, many of whom were picked up by Indian forces during night raids, still remain unknown, even after lapse of over one year.

Given India's dismal track record, many families fear that their missing relatives have been killed during fake encounters and their bodies dumped into unmarked graves. The extra-judicial execution of three labourers in the Shopian district in July 2020 is yet another evidence of India's deliberate ploy to kill civilians with impunity.

Pakistan has called for independent and international inquiry into these tragic killings.



Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN

Geneva

Draconian laws, such as AFPA and PSA enable absolute impunity to the Indian regime on enforced disappearance in Kashmir.

We, therefore, fully endorse the Working Group's call that thorough and independent investigations should be carried out to determine the fate of missing Kashmiris, and hold accountable those responsible for their disappearance.

We also call on India to implement the erstwhile Kashmir State Human Rights Commission's directives to carry out forensic examination of the remains discovered in the mass graves in north Kashmir.

I thank you.