

Message from Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi on  
Kashmir Solidarity Day 2021

This 5<sup>th</sup> February, we reaffirm our unflinching solidarity with the Kashmiris in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). The entire Pakistani nation stands with them in their valiant struggle to secure their inalienable right to self-determination.

For 18 months now, IIOJK is under continuous Indian military siege, with Kashmiris virtually caged in their own houses, reeling under communications blockade, and facing severe restrictions on the media. Their political leadership continues to be incarcerated. Under the suffocating military siege and in the face of ravaging COVID-19 pandemic, the Indian army has continued cordon-and-search operations, staged fake "encounters", and indulged in a killing spree of Kashmiri youth in IIOJK -- thus further accentuating the grave humanitarian tragedy there.

Following the extremist "Hindutva" ideology, the RSS-BJP regime has also embarked on a design to change the demographic structure of the occupied territory and obliterate the distinct Kashmiri identity. Apart from new domicile and property laws, the rules changing the official status of Urdu language are all part of this sinister campaign.

The international media, UN Secretary General, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, World Parliaments, Human Rights and Civil Society organizations have highlighted the grave human rights violations in IIOJK -- including detentions without trial, use of pellet guns, and extra-judicial killings.

The international community must continue to act in support of the fundamental freedoms and basic human rights of the Kashmiris and urge India to allow the UN Fact Finding Mission to investigate the grave human rights violations in IIOJK. India must allow the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) unhindered access to carry out its mandate. If India has nothing to hide, it must allow international media and civil society to visit and report on the human rights situation in IIOJK.

Pakistan reiterates its call on the international community to hold India accountable for its egregious violations of human rights and serious crimes against the Kashmiri people. Pakistan also reaffirms full support for its Kashmiri brothers and sisters. This solidarity will continue until the Kashmiris achieve their inalienable right to self-determination as enshrined in the UN Charter and relevant UN Security Council Resolutions. This is the only course to durable peace, security and development in South Asia.