

Message from Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi,
Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
on Kashmiris' Right to Self-determination Day – 5th January 2021

Today, Kashmiris around the world are observing the 72nd anniversary of the United Nations' commitment that the Jammu and Kashmir dispute would be decided through the democratic method of a free and impartial plebiscite under the UN auspices. Through this resolution, the United Nations affirmed its support for realization of the inalienable right to self-determination of Kashmiris – a right from which all other fundamental freedoms and basic human rights emanate.

Regrettably, this right of Kashmiris is being brazenly denied by India in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) for more than past seven decades. The United Nations, especially the UN Security Council, bear the responsibility to ensure fulfilment of the promise of granting the right to self-determination to the Kashmiris. India is the sole cause of non-fulfilment of this promise. Post 5 August 2019, India's unabated oppression has reached unprecedented levels with the inhuman military siege now in place for over 500 days. In the midst of Covid-19 pandemic, India has deprived Kashmiris of their basic rights to life, health and food.

Thanks to awakened global conscience, the fresh spate of India's illegal and unilateral actions, aimed at altering the disputed status of IIOJK and bringing about demographic change to undermine the right to self-determination of Kashmiris, have been widely rejected by the international community. The international community must continue its support for the fundamental freedoms and basic human rights of Kashmiris and urge India to allow the UN to investigate the grave human rights violations in IIOJK. India must allow United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) unhindered access to carry out its duties in IIOJK. If India has nothing to hide, why does it not allow international media and civil society to visit and report on the human rights situation in IIOJK?

Let me reaffirm Pakistan's strong and steadfast support to the valiant Kashmiri people in their just struggle for human dignity and their inalienable right to self-determination in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions.
