



Press Release

***At UNSC Debate, Pakistan Highlights Grave Violations of
Children's Rights***

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Expressing deep concern about the 32,990 verified grave violations against children detailed in the United Nations Secretary-General's report, Pakistan has stated that children living under foreign occupation, such as those in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and Palestine, are particularly vulnerable to violence and human rights abuses.

Speaking during the United Nations Security Council Open Debate on Children and Armed Conflict today, Ambassador Munir Akram, the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN, criticized the report for its persistent and glaring failure and selective omission of the plight of children in Palestine and IIOJK despite their ongoing suffering under foreign occupation.

Ambassador Akram highlighted that despite the killing of 14,000 children in the Gaza war, it took significant pressure for Israel to be included in the report, while the plight of children in IIOJK was unjustly omitted.

He stated that generations of Kashmiri children have grown up in an environment of violence, repression, and fear, noting that the humanitarian crisis for Kashmiri children worsened after India's unilateral actions of August 2019.

He referred to heart-wrenching incidents, especially those involving a three-year-old Kashmiri boy sitting in shock on his grandfather's lifeless body and 18-month-old Hiba's eyes being ruptured by pellet guns, to underscore the gravity of the rights abuses suffered by children in IIOJK.

The Pakistan UN envoy called for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and several Special Rapporteurs of the Human Rights Council to be granted access to IIOJK to investigate massive violations of human rights. He requested the Special Rapporteur to investigate the whereabouts and condition of the 13,000 Kashmiri youth detained by Indian occupation forces after August 5, 2019.

Ambassador Munir Akram mentioned that in 2022, Pakistan provided the United Nations with a comprehensive dossier of 3,432 cases of war crimes, including crimes against women and children, committed by senior officers of the Indian occupying forces. These violations were corroborated with audio and video evidence, and numerous cases of crimes against Kashmiri children were included, he said.

He stated that the UN Secretary-General's report last year rightly urged India to implement measures to protect children, including prohibiting the use of lethal and non-lethal force, ending the use of pellet guns, and preventing the ill-treatment of children in detention. Pakistan, he said, strongly urges continued reporting on the situation in IIOJK.

Ambassador Akram emphasized that Pakistan supports the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) to address situations of children in armed conflict but stressed that the legal parameters of the SRSG's mandate must be respected. He stated that references to Pakistan in the Secretary-General's report were outside the mandate of the Special Rapporteur.

Demonstrating Pakistan's commitment to child protection, Ambassador Akram affirmed that as one of the earliest signatories to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Pakistan is fully committed to implementing its provisions. He noted that extensive legal, policy, and operational measures have been adopted to protect children, adding that Pakistan established a National Committee on Child Protection and appointed a national focal person last year.

Despite its principled position on the SRSG's mandate, Pakistan will continue to engage with the SRSG's office to further strengthen child protection in Pakistan in line with its national framework and international obligations, he told the Security Council.