



**Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram for the Special  
Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth  
Committee) of the 77th Session of the United Nations  
General Assembly Agenda Item 55: Implementation of  
the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to  
Colonial Countries and Peoples  
(11th October 2022)**

\*\*\*

**Thank you, Mr. Chairman,**

I wish to congratulate you on your election as the Chair of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee and other members of the bureau of the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. I am confident that under your leadership, the work of the Committee will achieve satisfactory conclusions.

2. My delegation wishes to make the following points in my national capacity on item 55: “Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples”.

**Excellency,**

3. The Decolonization process is one of the main goals of the United Nations. The subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination, and exploitation, which constitutes a denial of fundamental human rights, is contrary to the United Nation’s Charter and an impediment to the promotion of world’s peace and cooperation.

4. Since its independence, Pakistan has extended consistent and active support to the decolonization process provided by the United Nations, in accordance with the provisions and objectives of the Charter and the principles enshrined in resolution 1514 (XV), especially the principle of self-determination of peoples. We fully endorse the target, set by the United Nations, to eradicate colonialism by 2030 and the plan of action for the International Decades for the Eradication of Colonialism, and other resolutions of the Assembly.

5. Pakistan also welcomes the recommendations of the Special Committee, contained in its report A/77/23, requesting the Secretary General to explore innovative ways of using his good offices to advance the decolonization agenda. We welcome the Secretary-General’s commitment to implement the decolonization agenda.

6. Eradicating colonialism is part of the unfinished agenda of the United Nations. Since 1946, 80 former colonies have gained independence. Yet, there are still peoples who are denied the right to self-determination, most prominently among them are the people of occupied Jammu & Kashmir and Palestine.

**Mr. Chairman,**

7. Durable peace in the Middle East can only be achieved through the two-state solution and the establishment of a viable, independent and the contiguous State of Palestine, with the pre-1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital. In the meantime, the world must continue to extend all possible social, economic, and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinians, including the Palestinian refugees, through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

**Mr. Chairman,**

8. Similarly, the Indian occupation of Jammu & Kashmir is the worst manifestation of modern-day colonialism. The Declaration on Decolonization proclaims that 'all people' have the right to self-determination. The founding fathers of the United Nations expressly acknowledged the primacy of this right by placing it in the very first article of the UN Charter. It is also the core right contained in Common Article II of the UN Conventions on Civil and Political Rights and Economic and Social Rights. In the case of Jammu and Kashmir, this right was further sanctified by the UN Security Council which prescribed, in several resolutions, that the final disposition of the state should be decided by its people through a free and fair plebiscite held under UN auspices.

9. Kashmir today is the most densely occupied place in the world, with 900,000 Indian occupation troops deployed in a region the size of Belgium, with one Indian soldier for every 8 Kashmiri man, woman, and child. This massive Indian occupation force has perpetrated a vicious campaign of repressive actions, including extra-judicial killings of innocent Kashmiris in fake encounters; custodial killings and "cordon and search" operations; abduction and enforced disappearances of 15,000 young Kashmiri boys; incarceration of the entire Kashmiri leadership; collective punishments, with the destruction and burning of entire villages and urban neighbourhoods.

10. It has been three years since India unilaterally and illegally initiated its attempt to annex occupied Jammu and Kashmir and impose what its leadership has ominously called a "Final Solution" for Kashmir. This is a brutal colonial enterprise to deny the right to self-determination to the Kashmiri people as prescribed by the UN Security Council. To this end, India has resorted to a series of illegal actions, gross and consistent violations of human rights and other crimes.

11. This brutal campaign of oppression is turbo-charged by the ideology of “Hindutva” which asserts the religious and ethnic supremacy of Hindus and hate against Muslims. Noting this pattern, Professor Gregory H. Stanton, President of Genocide Watch, warned that “the Indian government’s actions in Kashmir have been an extreme case of persecution and could very well lead to genocide”.

12. After every so-called ‘cordon and search’ operation, Kashmiris are extrajudicially killed in state-managed encounters. Just last week, over a dozen Kashmiris were murdered in such “encounters”. Since its unilateral and illegal actions of August 5, 2019, Indian Occupation Forces have murdered more than 678 Kashmiris, including at least 158 this year.

13. Indian authorities have imposed a wall-of-silence over IIOJK with a physical lockdowns and a total information blackout. This continues in various forms to this day. The state machinery does not allow any international visits or verification of the ground situation in IIOJK. Indian authorities have for decades imposed censorship and surveillance to suppress the voice of the Kashmiri people. Journalists, lawyers, and human rights defenders are routinely incarcerated, beaten, humiliated, harassed and even accused of “terrorism” for reporting on the human rights violations in IIOJK.

14. The Indian authorities have incarcerated the entire Kashmiri political leadership. The Hurriyat leadership, the true representatives of Kashmiri political aspirations, has been under continued detention for 3 years. Most of these leaders have been subjected to brutal and inhumane treatment at the hands of occupation forces.

15. In a classic settler-colonial project, India has initiated a process of demographic change in occupied Kashmir. This is central to its scheme to convert IIOJK from a Muslim majority State to a Hindu majority territory and thus drown out the demand for freedom and self-determination. New “domicile rules” have been introduced, and over 3.4 million fake domicile certificates issued to Hindus from all across India to settle in occupied Kashmir. The land and properties of Kashmiris are also being confiscated for military and official use.

16. All the unilateral measures undertaken by India since 5 August 2019 are blatant violations of international law, including the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Security Council resolution 122 (1957) provides that unilateral measures “to determine the future shape and affiliation of the entire State or any part thereof, or action by the parties concerned in support of any such action would... not constitute a disposition of the State”. Therefore, all the unilateral actions taken by India on and after 5 August 2019 are not only illegal but, ipso facto, null and void.

17. As provided in Security Council resolution 47 of 1948, and several subsequent Security Council resolutions, the final disposition of the State of Jammu and Kashmir is to be decided by its people through a free and fair plebiscite conducted under UN supervision. This was accepted by India and Pakistan and, in accordance with Article 25 of the UN Charter, both parties are obligated to implement these Security Council resolutions. This is the sole legal basis for the resolution of the Jammu & Kashmir dispute.

18. Pakistan desires peaceful relations with all its neighbours, including India. To ensure durable peace in South Asia, the resolution of the Jammu & Kashmir dispute is essential. The onus is on India to create conditions for a dialogue to resolve the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. To this end, India must: one, stop all human rights violations in occupied Jammu and Kashmir; two, halt and reverse demographic change there; and three, restore Kashmir’s statehood and identity by reversing the illegal and unilateral measures imposed on and after 5 August 2019.

19. The Security Council and the Secretary-General must actively promote a peaceful settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions and the wishes of the Kashmiri people by fully utilizing the modalities provided for in Chapter VI of the UN Charter, including Articles 33, 34 and 99 of the Charter.

**I thank you.**