

**Message from H.E. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari**  
**Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan**  
**(Kashmir Black Day 27<sup>th</sup> October, 2022)**

Today marks the 75<sup>th</sup> sombre anniversary of India's illegal occupation of the Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) against their will. Seventy-five years ago on 27<sup>th</sup> October 1947, India forcibly landed its troops in IIOJK and continues to forcibly and illegally occupy this territory ever since.

For over seven decades, the Jammu and Kashmir dispute has been a battle of hope against overwhelming odds, of courage against fear, and of sacrifice against tyranny. Thousands of innocent Kashmiri men, women and children have lost their lives at the hands of Indian brutality. We pay rich tributes to all the martyrs for their ultimate sacrifice and to their families for their resolve and perseverance.

India's intensified campaign to force demographic changes in IIOJK is in full swing since 5<sup>th</sup> August 2019 when it revoked Article 370 and 35 A of its own constitution that had granted special status to IIOJK. The events of the last three years have included repressive measures such as outrageous gerrymandering to create Hindu-dominated constituencies in Muslim majority areas, issuance of millions of fake domicile certificates to non-Kashmiris, new laws on ownership of land and property, and expansion of voter rolls to include non-Kashmiri residents. These undemocratic and illegal measures are in direct contravention of UN resolutions and the Fourth Geneva Convention. They signify nothing but India's malicious campaign to change the distinct Kashmiri identity.

With 900,000 troops, IIOJK has become one of the most heavily militarized regions of the world. Nearly 690 Kashmiris have lost their lives in extra-judicial killings since 5<sup>th</sup> August 2019, including 170 just this year. The true representatives of the Kashmiri people have been arbitrarily detained for years. However, India's intransigence and brutality in the IIOJK cannot continue indefinitely.

To this day, India has failed to attain its objectives of subjugating the Kashmiri people. Kashmiris have yearned for freedom while confronting the most brutal forms of oppression at the hands of Indian occupation forces. The innumerable sacrifices and resilience of the people of Jammu & Kashmir have thwarted all Indian attempts of coercion and control. The resolute spirit of the people of Kashmir remains intact.

Three successive generations of Kashmiris have waited for the world and the United Nations to deliver. Pakistan calls upon the international community to take practical steps to hold India accountable and Indian Government must reverse the unilateral and illegal actions of 5<sup>th</sup> August 2019; stop its egregious human rights violations in IIOJK; repeal the draconian laws and implement the relevant UN Security Council resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir.

I promise my Kashmiri brothers and sisters that their struggle and their sacrifices will not go in vain. The world can no more eschew its responsibility. We owe it to the Kashmiris.

