



LEGAL FORUM FOR KASHMIR

Ref No # LFK/21/2023

Date: 3rd February, 2023

Press Release

ISLAMABAD, 3 February 2023: Legal Forum for Kashmir (LFK) organized a roundtable debate on Kashmir solidarity Day in Islamabad. Every year 5th February is observed as Kashmir Solidarity Day and is a public holiday in Pakistan. It focuses on showing Pakistan's support and unity with the people of Indian-occupied Kashmir, their ongoing freedom struggle, and to pay homage to Kashmiri martyrs who lost their lives fighting for Kashmir's freedom. This day is also celebrated in honor of the Kashmiris who have lost their lives in the freedom struggle.

The primary focus of the roundtable debate on Kashmir Solidarity Day held at LFK head office Islamabad was the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), who have undergone massive human rights violations at the hands of Indian security forces since decades.

The speakers of the roundtable debate included Professor Amina Mahmood, former social sciences dean at international Islamic University Islamabad, Mr. Mukhtar Baba, spokesperson of Muslim League Jammu and Kashmir and other research scholars.

Mr. Nasir Qadri Executive Director of Legal Forum Kashmir (KFK) in his opening remarks welcomed all the guests and worthy speakers. Mr. Nasir Qadri stated that Kashmir Solidarity Day, since past three years is being celebrated in a changed environment after huge number of Kashmiri people and their leaders were put in different jails and detention centers after India unilaterally and illegally changed its status on 05 August 2019. Abrogation of semi-autonomous status of IIOJK was another criminal act of the Indian Government, a violation of the UN Charter, UN resolutions and a serious violation of the Humanitarian Declaration-1948. Since August 2019 an aggressive campaign of settler-colonialist project is being pursued by the Modi regime. He added that with Abrogation of autonomous character of Indian occupied Kashmir on August 5, 2019, the India's relationship with the disputed region has been transitioned into fully settler colonial state. Since last over three years, these Indian forces have killed hundreds of Kashmiri youths, torched and detonated houses. The occupational forces have been given total impunity and freedom by the BJP Government under Modi. Unfortunately, there is no response from the international community over this illegal Indian act and India is taking advantage of this international silence and insensitive Muslim world. Moreover he said there has been a long period of victimization in Kashmir and this occupation is both unlawful and unjustified. It is one of the longest-lasting occupations in history.

Professor Amina Mahmood stated that Kashmir issue demands that state of Pakistan must put serious efforts to stop unprecedented assault on the identity of Kashmir. The situation of Kashmir

is worsening day by day. Thousands of Kashmiri people along with their political and religious leadership has been put into different jails across India or else under house arrest. The demographic changes have been going on in IIOJK aimed to convert the Muslim majority into minority. The aim of the BJP Government lead by the Narendra Modi and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), is to terrorize the Muslim Kashmiri masses. Moreover, she said that when the Kashmir leadership and scholars are kept away to address the masses and everything is frozen so in this situation some concrete and bold steps must be taken.

Moreover Dr. Amina stated that Pakistan must not keep Kashmir issue on back burner. That is not only worsening the situation in Kashmir but also in state of Pakistan. The politics of Pakistan is linked with the issue of Kashmir. To leave people of Kashmir extremely in helpless situation actually jeopardizes the national security of our state. The peaceful and prosperous Pakistan is only possible if the long-standing dispute of Kashmir will be resolved. It is the need of the time thatb Pakistan must revive its policies especially the Kashmir policy. The current foreign policy of Pakistan is not proactive, it's reactive. Due to the current policies and actions the enemy is getting bold day by day. They are totally in offensive mode and are trying very hard to destabilize Pakistan and are attacking every institution of the state.

Mr. Mukhtar Baba, spokesperson of Muslim League lead by incarcerated Masrat Alam expressed serious concern about the Indian actions that are going on in IIOJK and raised serious questions regarding future of Kashmir and failure of Pakistan and Kashmiris to convenience world that India is an aggressor. He stated that the people of Kashmir are not hopeless, they are helpless. They have not lost hope, they are firmly standing and are showing persistency in freedom struggle despite facing worst kind of brutalities. No doubt Pakistan is extending its political, diplomatic and moral support for decades but it is the need of the time that Pakistan must revive its Kashmiri policy. Demographic changes are major threat to the status of international dispute. Without delaying Pakistan should take serious actions and raise Kashmir issue and to settle dispute as per the aspirations of people of IIOJK.

The event was concluded by a question-answer session where many participants posed different questions to which the honorable speakers answered with much clarity.