



USCMO BRIEFING

USCMO's Emergency Diplomacy to Unmask and Build International Support to Turn Back India's Invasion, Communications Lockdown and Annexation of Kashmir, and to Restore the Kashmiri People's Long-Standing Right of Plebiscite

The US Council of Muslim Organizations has launched an emergency diplomatic action against the Republic of India's shocking and internationally illegal massive military occupation and political annexation of Kashmir on August 5, the Day of Eid Al-Adha, and especially in the face of India's unprecedented total communications lockdown of the people of Kashmir, which is now entering its 7th week.

USCMOs emergency Kashmir diplomatic campaign has been two-pronged. Its consultative leadership has organized formal protests calling attention to India's occupation and repression, while its envoys have met with officials whose responsibilities encompass Kashmir from the United States, the European Union, the United Nations, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and Islamic Republic of Pakistan to represent the American Muslim Community's alarm at India's aggression in Muslim Kashmir and to highlight the undemocratic Hindu-Chauvinist bigotry driving it.

"The American Muslim community has grave concern about India's excessive, violent repression of Kashmir's long-promised and guaranteed international right to self-determination and the Kashmiri people's God-given right to freely choose for themselves their own national future," said Oussama Jammal, USCMO Secretary General, leading the Council's diplomatic efforts.

"But on a more basic level, India's actions have set Kashmir on a track of inevitable and major humanitarian disaster - particularly because India has blocked communication

between Kashmir's people, even between family members, as well as their freedom of movement inside Kashmir," he said.

And just as egregiously, India has imposed a lockdown on the Kashmiri people, totally disabling their contact with the outside world. Nor can the world go in and see the people or even speak with them. This can only mean that India is perpetrating untold and unrestrained abuses and violations against the Kashmiri people.

The history of conflict between India and Pakistan, two nuclear powers, with Kashmir as a flashpoint, makes India's invasion and repression of Kashmir a critical global concern.

USCMO has outlined five critical needs of intervention for the people and crisis of Kashmir:

1. Invocation of Article 99 of the Charter of the UN to independently intervene in this crisis.
2. Calling for an immediate lifting of India's siege of Kashmir; its restoration of free speech to its population, including free contact and access to all communication avenues internally and internationally, and the right to free assembly and political self-exercise.
3. Appointment of a special envoy on Kashmir of international standing, someone like Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland and UN High Commissioner on Human Rights, to visit, assess the situation, and report back to the Security Council.
4. Convening of a follow up, formal emergency meeting of the Security Council on Kashmir to diffuse the extremely volatile situation and to explore how to democratically resolve this colonial-era crisis.
5. Bringing the international community to bear on India's government to restore and respect the intents of Articles 370 and 35A, and to repeal its imposition of draconian laws in Kashmir, like the "Armed Forces Special Powers Act." UN High Commissioner on Human Rights Michelle Bachelet Jeria has already made such recommendation in her 43-page report issued July 8, 2019.

A summary of the Council's initiatives and diplomatic meetings over the past month follows.

August 16

1. *Republic of India Embassy Rally, Washington D.C.*



Rally in front of the Embassy of India in Washington, DC.

USCMO members and supporters of Kashmir's national and human rights rallied in front of

the Indian Embassy, formally protesting the massive military and paramilitary invasion of Kashmir (which began at the stroke of midnight, August 4) with some 700,000 soldiers and irregulars of the ruling BJP Hindu chauvinist party's parent paramilitary organization RSS locking down the whole of Kashmir, with shoot-to-kill orders for people who came out of their homes. That's one soldier for every 10 Kashmiris, making it the most militarized place in the world.

The rally condemned six major Indian violations of Kashmiri people's self-evident political freedoms and human rights:

- **THE COMMUNICATION BLACKOUT** of 7 million Kashmiris, a humanitarian catastrophe in violation of Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which India is a state party.
- **THE JAILING OF THOUSANDS OF KASHMIRIS**, including arbitrary, "preemptive" arrests of seated politicians, activists, and citizens, mostly young men and boys.
- **THE DETAINMENT OF JOURNALISTS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS**, part of the communications lockdown, designed to keep the world in the dark about India's use of lethal force and repression to put down Kashmir's people and stymie any international momentum to hold India accountable.
- **THE KILLING OF CIVILIANS**, which comes on the heels of years of Indian paramilitary troops and soldiers conducting an egregious, open campaign of deliberately blinding and maiming Kashmiri youth and children with pellet weaponry designed for this pernicious purpose. Since 1990, India's military and paramilitary have killed more than 80,000 Kashmiris and imprisoned thousands more.
- **THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT'S UNILATERAL ABOLITION OF ARTICLES 370 AND 35A OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION**, which preserve Kashmir's autonomy and demographic integrity. These two articles were put in place in 1947 to satisfy the agreement of United Nations and the international community, including India, to allow Kashmiri's themselves to determine their own future national identity.
- **THE MYSOGYNST RHETORIC OF INDIA'S BJP OFFICIALS** like "Kashmir is open. ... we can bring girls from there."

August 28

2. U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Ervin J. Massinga



Photo from left: Dr. Imtiaz Khan, Dr. Zahid Bukhary, Dr. Osama Abuirshaid, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Ervin Massinga, Asif Khan, Oussama Jammal, Adam Packer, Nihad Awad, Dr. Abdul Raouf Mir.

USCMO and Kashmiri American leaders met with **U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Ervin J. Massinga** expressing the grave concerns of the American Muslim community for India's military occupation of Kashmir and repression of its people; and seeking clarification of the United States' position on the crisis.

USCMO officials submitted a formal letter on the Kashmir crisis for hand delivery to U.S. Secretary of State Michael Pompeo. Later, USCMO received [response](#) from Secretary Pompeo delivered by Acting Assistant Secretary of State Amb. Alice Wells.

Discussions at the State Department included (1) the humanitarian crisis caused by the government of India; (2) the dire health, hunger, and safety perils of the Kashmiri people; (3) the high regional and global volatility of the situation; and (4) personal testimonials from Kashmiri Americans who have lost contact with their family members visiting relatives in Kashmir at the time of India's occupation.

In addition, talks focused on the dangerous nuclear ramifications of India's unilateral military occupation.

Mr. Massinga assured the delegation of the U.S. administration's close contact with India and Pakistan in order to diffuse tensions and bring both to negotiations regarding the communal status Jammu-Kashmir.

The administration has asked India to uphold its original constitutional mandate with regard to the autonomous status of Kashmir.

The administration pledged to follow up with Kashmiri Americans who have family members stranded in Kashmir and to assist families toward reunion.

Mr. Massinga agreed on behalf of the State Department to keep open lines of communication with USCMO and to provide periodic updates on its efforts in the Kashmir crisis. (Read more here: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1504152>)

AUGUST 29

3. Islamic Republic of Pakistan Ambassador to U.S., H.E. Asad M. Khan

USCMO delegates met with Ambassador Asad M. Khan at the Washington D.C. embassy of Pakistan, discussing the Kashmir crisis and the official position of Pakistan. Mr. Khan emphasized that Pakistan remains committed to peaceful talks regarding Jammu-Kashmir and to the people of Kashmir and their right to self-determination. Mr. Khan also assured representatives that Pakistan's commitment included humanitarian assistance.

SEPTEMBER 4

4. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Ambassador Aghsin Mehdiyev



Photo from left: Muhammad T. Rahman, Irfan Malik, Ambassador Aghsin Mehdiyev, Oussama Jammal, Dr. Zahid Bukhari.

USCMO delegation met with Ambassador Aghsin Mehdiyev, OIC Permanent Observer to the United Nations, at the OIC mission in New York. USCMO Secretary General Oussama Jammal formally requested Ambassador Mehdiyev to convey the grave concerns of the American Muslim community for the welfare of the Kashmiri people and the Kashmiri Americans stranded by India's lockdown and occupation to all OIC member nation representatives attending the UN General Assembly meeting September 17.

The delegation urged OIC to demand that member countries exert maximal pressure on the Indian government to lift its lockdown on Kashmir and open all means of communication for the people. USCMO representatives also pressed for all member OIC nations to commit to massive humanitarian assistance for the people of Kashmir.

USCMO delegation also discussed future cooperation with OIC on various issues of common interest and to enhance their channels of communication.

SEPTEMBER 5

5. United States Mission to the United Nations

A USCMO delegation met with officials of the US Mission to the UN regarding the Kashmir crisis, expressing the American Muslim community's grave concerns for the democratic autonomy and right to self-determination of the Kashmiri people, and India's humanitarian violations against them. US Mission representatives stressed that the US position in the Security Council is peaceful negotiations between India and Pakistan and the need to assess the humanitarian situation in Jammu-Kashmir and meet the needs of the people.

SEPTEMBER 6

6. European Union Delegation to the United States

USCMO expanded its diplomatic campaign and reached out to various international entities including the European Union Delegation to the United States, which has embassy-like status for the EU with the U.S. **USCMO Secretary General, Oussama Jammal, met with Ms. Helena Boguslawska, Deputy Head of the Political, Security and Development Section of the EU Delegation. Secretary General Jammal highlighted the humanitarian and political rights of the Kashmiri people and the alarming violation of both by India's occupation and repression of Kashmir. Ms. Boguslawska noted his deep concern especially for the humanitarian costs of India's actions and affirmed Kashmir's long-standing internationally approved right to autonomy and plebiscite for its people to determine their country's direction.**

SEPTEMBER 17

7. Signed on Letter to Gates Foundation Opposing Award to PM Modi

USCMO along with 51 civil and human rights, refugee and religious organizations signed on a [letter](#) requesting the **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation not to award its premier Global Goalkeeper Award to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi given his government's well-documented human rights abuses targeting minority Muslim, Dalit and Christian communities, as well as its recent and illegal revocation of Article 370 of the Indian constitution, stripping the state of Jammu & Kashmir of its protected status, and laying siege to its 8 million residents.**

More meetings and follow-ups on the Kashmir issue are planned in the coming days and weeks. USCMO continues to seek out positive and dynamic initiatives to help establish the human rights of the suffering Kashmiris and other peoples under duress, and to

gather national and regional Muslim organizations in the United States in order to give American Muslims representation nationally and internationally on the crisis in Kashmir and other issues of concern to this community.



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