

WE ARE DRIFTING TOWARDS WAR BECAUSE OF INDIA'S AGGRESSIVE POSTURING: MASOOD KHAN



Sardar Masood Khan, President Azad Jammu and Kashmir while talking to an audience consisting of academics, researchers, lawyers and journalists, said that a just and lasting solution to the Kashmir dispute lies in the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions and firmly urged not to rely on bilateral dialogues with India.

The President made these remarks while speaking on the Kashmir crisis organised by the Middle East Institute (MEI) and INDUS, a DC based diaspora led think-tank. The event was hosted by Marvin Weinbaum, Director for Afghanistan and Pakistan Studies at MEI, and Raza Rumi, President INDUS.

The AJK President highlighted the need for taking up strenuous efforts for highlighting the plight of the Kashmiris suffering at the hands of

the Indian occupation forces. He said that it has been 57 days since India has once again invaded the disputed territory and is now making ground to colonise it. He said the unilateral measures taken by India after August 5 were illegal and illicit, and in clear contravention of the Fourth Geneva Convention Additional Protocol I and ICC Statutes.

President Masood stressed upon his audience that the Indian government under a communication blackout and security lockdown has arrested thousands of young Kashmiris and sent them to various jails all over India. He said the detainees are being subjected to torture and are mercilessly beaten with cables and rods. He condemned the human rights violations perpetrated by India and stressed upon the international community to come to the rescue of the Kashmiri people.

The President highlighted five main points to the participants. Firstly, he appealed to the international community and the global civil society to save Kashmiris from the carnage of the Indian occupation forces. He added that the environment in IOK is ripe for genocide and pogrom and the world must act before it is too late. Secondly, he said the unilateral decision by India be revoked and the disputed status of Kashmir be restored.

Thirdly, he warned that we are drifting towards war and we must curb India's aggressive posturing. He said that the Indian political leadership and high ranking officials continue to say that they will "retake" Azad Kashmir and are also threatening to use nuclear weapons to annihilate Pakistan. Any sort of military engagement, he said, can escalate to a nuclear war and the aftereffects would be devastating and long lasting not only for the region but the whole world. India, he said, must avoid its policy of nuclear brinkmanship.

Fourth, he said that we must not ignore the growing tide of extremist Hindu ideology – Hindutva – that is being promoted by the BJP led Indian government. Hindutva he said advocates hatred towards all

religions and promotes supremacy of Hinduism and Hindus.

Lastly, he said that it is pertinent to find a just and lasting solution to the Kashmir issue. He said the solution lies in the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions which guarantees the right to self-determination of the Kashmiri people. He said that numerous alternate formulas and ideas that have been floated for the resolution of the Kashmir issue are irrelevant. Such formulas and bilateral talks with India would never work as it only maintains the status quo, he said. “No formula or mediation would be successful or acceptable without the inclusion of the Kashmiris in the process”, said Masood Khan.

Commending the role of the international media, he said that they have helped shape a factual narrative on Kashmir and subsequently have rejected India’s falsehood. He said that despite members of the European Parliament, Congress and other leading parliaments being very vocal on Kashmir, global capitals – other than China, Iran, Turkey and Malaysia – are tight lipped on Kashmir or have adopted an ambivalent approach.

Summing up his talk, the President said that even though the people of Kashmir have been suffering since 200 years, first under the oppressive Dogra regime and now under the Indian occupation forces, their resolve has not faltered. “No matter how complicated this issue gets and how complex world politics gets we will continue to strive for our inalienable right to self-determination”, affirmed the AJK President