

PRESS RELEASE

KASHMIR AND KASHMIRIS ASPIRE FOR PEACE AND SECURITY

GENEVA, 1 JULY 2019: International Human Rights Association of American Minorities (IHRAAM) in collaboration with International Commission for Human Rights (ICHR), Indigenous Peoples Nations Coalition (IPNC) and South Asia Centre for Peace and Human Rights (SACFPHR) organised a parallel event at the 41st session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) at the Palais Des Nations.

The common thread of the distinguished panellists revolved around the Kashmiris aspiration to have their fundamental human rights for peace and security achieved through the process extending their inalienable right to self-determination.



In his opening remarks, Member of the European Parliament Dr Prof Klaus Buchner notes with regret that India has blocked the Kashmiris referendum with terrible consequences resulting in massive gross human rights abuses in Indian Held Kashmir (IHK). He further remarked that the newly elected Indian government must not make the situation in IHK worse. *“Indian trade and economy is not important, human rights and peace should prevail, it is heartening to know that Kashmiris want peace and security and that is optimistic,”* MEP Klaus Buchner declared.

Madam Victoria Scofield, a renowned writer and expert on the Kashmir conflict, linked her well balanced presentation with her recent visit to the valley of Kashmir. She stated that life in the valley is incredibly difficult primarily because of the India’s disastrous polices and severe human rights violations on a daily basis in the valley. *“BJP’s landslide victory in the recent Lok Sabha elections has generated serious fears about the abrogation of Articles 35A and 370 despite the fact the valley has already lost whatever autonomy it had. Nevertheless,*

demographic change appears underway, Indian repression will continue as long as alienation remains but the peoples thrust also remains on "Azadi,"" Madam Scofield concluded.

Prof Nazir A Shawl, Chairman of SACFPHR and constituent member of Organisation of Kashmir Coalition (OKC), in his intervention highlighted that the International Community is aware South Asia, which has a population of over a billion people, poses a serious threat to world peace and security because of the 70 year old Kashmir conflict. He added that both Pakistan and India have nuclear capabilities and in any unpredictable military confrontation one cannot rule out their use. Prof Shawl further stated that under the Doval doctrine Kashmiris have no rights and that demographic change in IHK is underway.



Prof Alfred De Zayas, Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Relations and First Independent Expert on the Promotion of a Demographic and Equitable International Order (former), believes that peoples right to self-determination is the best conflict prevention strategy therefore, it is obligatory for the United Nations to mediate to achieve and maintain world peace and security. He referred to his 2013-14 report to the UN General Assembly in which, under paragraph 69(n), the Kashmiris right to self-determination has been raised. *"UN must mediate on Kashmir and that would lead to Kashmiris peace and security,"* Prof De Zayas declared.

Frank Schwalba-Hoth, Co-founder German Greens and former Member of the European Parliament, lamented the proposed demographic change in IHK. He aims to push the Kashmir conflict on a higher agenda of the European Union. *"The upcoming Champions of Peace exhibition in the European Parliament is an important step in this direction,"* Schwalba-Hoth announced.

Ambassador Ronald Barnes, Chair and Director of IPNC, Head of Mission in Geneva for the Alaskan Decolonization Movement, expressed the view that the puppet governments cause obstacles to resolve disputes by applying procedures unfairly thereby blocking debates, discussions and resolutions deliberately. *“We need to work together to overcome such obstructions so that conflicts such as Kashmir is addressed peacefully,”* he declared.

Barrister A. Majid Trambo, European Director and Permanent Representative of IHRAAM to the United Nations and constituent member of OKC, moderated the parallel event. In his introductory remarks he stated that promotion and protection for human rights for peace and security are principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and these are directly related to peoples right to self-determination.

Barrister Trambo added that the Kashmir issue is a political issue; it is an issue of Kashmiris freedom from Indian occupation and repression. He was categorical for Kashmiris desire for peace and security but this can be achieved only by ensuring that they are extended the UN promised right to self-determination.

