



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

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### Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

## **Written statement\* submitted by Action internationale pour la paix et le développement dans la région des Grands Lacs, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[29 January 2024]

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\* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



## **Social and Economic Rights, Including Right to Development**

I, wish to draw your kind attention towards those states which were unfortunately divided and my native state, the Kashmir region, is one of them. Nevertheless, the United Nations Security Council, mandated United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP), had passed some resolutions and methodology to resolve the Kashmir region conflict as per will and wishes of its people. But after passing more than seven decades the respective states didn't bothered to meet those obligations as stipulated in those resolutions. Due to that states craft and hegemonic policies of the Super structures in all parts of the Kashmir region the people have been deprived of significant social, cultural, economic, legal, constitutional and democratic rights including rights to development.

Since its inception the United Nations, focusing on the Right to Development, social, political, and economic rights of the people worldwide through various covenants and resolutions but majority of the people in Pakistani Administered Azad Jammu Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan have been denied those rights. It is imperative to acknowledge the existing challenges and Pakistan's shortcomings in these crucial areas.

Mr. President, the diversion of the natural flow of Neelum and Jhelum rivers crossing from Muzaffarabad, deforestation and destruction of the natural habitat has caused enormous damage to ecosystem in both regions under Pakistani control. The corruption is another phenomenon that consume a major chunk of development. The people have been compelled to collect donations to construct roads infrastructure at villages, to maintain water supply schemes throughout Pakistani Administered Azad Jammu and Kashmir and that phenomenon may observed by a fact finding mission if visit both regions. Minerals, electricity, foreign exchange aren't benefiting local populations. Ban on "Jammu & Kashmir history books" still exists and Pakistani intelligence agencies are continuously profiling nationalist political activists mainly of the United Kashmir People's National Party and its Student wing United Kashmir National Students Organization in various areas mainly in capital town Muzaffarabad. All the nationalist political leaders in Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan Administered Kashmir, has been placed under draconian laws like fourth schedule. Therefore, I' on behalf of my Organisation would appreciate if this august council establish a "Fact Finding Mission for the State of Jammu and Kashmir" and use its offices to ask state parties to cooperate in this regard. The Crimes of so called Jhadis must be investigated and those who have been victim of proxy war must be compensated by Pakistan.

The Right to Development is a fundamental human right, encompassing economic, social, and cultural progress. In the context of Azad Jammu Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan Administered Kashmir, there have been persistent concerns regarding the fulfillment of these rights. Despite the region's strategic significance, there is a pressing need for inclusive development policies that prioritize the well-being of the local population.

Socially, the people of these regions deserve equitable access to education, healthcare, and other basic services. Political rights, including participation and representation, must be ensured to foster a truly democratic society. Unfortunately, instances of restricted political freedoms and limited representation have been observed, indicating a gap in meeting international standards.

Economically, sustainable development is essential for the prosperity of these regions. It is crucial to address economic disparities and ensure that the benefits of development reach all segments of the population. Pakistan's failure in these economic aspects has contributed to a sense of marginalization among the people of Azad Jammu Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan Administered Kashmir.

Pakistan has used all the media tools, Radio, tv and newspapers to dismiss local culture, languages, traditions to advance its own geo strategic interests in our region. Our people especially the students have been deprived of advanced internet services.

As we discuss these concerns, it is important to emphasize the significance of international cooperation and accountability. The United Nations plays a pivotal role in facilitating dialogue and encouraging member states to uphold human rights standards.

It is incumbent upon Pakistan to reevaluate its policies, ensuring that the Right to Development is safeguarded in these regions.

In conclusion, the international community must continue to advocate for the rights of the people in Azad Jammu Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan Administered Kashmir. By holding Pakistan accountable for its failures in these areas, we can strive for a future where every individual enjoys the social, political, and economic rights enshrined in the principles of the United Nations.

It is crucial to internationally recognised peaceful movement of the people of both Peripheries ie Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan Administered Kashmir, where people are protesting for their basic rights and freedoms since the March 2023. Pakistan must ensure all rightful subsidiaries to our people including fulfilling their economic needs and Development.

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