



October 8, 2019
The Honorable Senator

Dear Senator,

As you are aware, Kashmir is one of the most militarized zones in the world. Since August 5th, its entire population has been under an unprecedented military lockdown and communications blackout. There are reports of mass incarcerations and sexual and physical abuse towards minors by the military, as well as disappearances and illegal detentions. A recent interfaith factfinding mission of women leaders has documented approximately 13,000 youth were taken by the military to unknown locations. Parents are frantic in their search for them.

The recent attempt by Senator Chris Van Hollen to visit the region and the rebuke by the Indian government is a classic example of the level that Kashmir has been hidden from the world. Currently, international journalists, human rights organizations, the United Nations, anyone who can relay the reality on the ground has been blocked from entry. International humanitarian organizations have been banned from the region for decades. India needs to release political prisoners and allow independent investigators to look into alleged human rights abuses.

Meanwhile, the Indian government is led by Narendra Modi, who is part of a right wing-militant extremist Hindutva party, the BJP, which has sanctioned violence, curtailment of civil liberties, and persecution of religious and other minorities. Modi himself presided over a pogrom in 2002 in which 2000 Muslims were murdered in the Indian state of Gujrat, where he was the governor at the time. According to Human Rights Watch, Modi and the BJP were complicit in this violence. Kashmir is the only Muslim-majority state and there is a very real possibility that the current military lockdown, escalation in military presence, and communications blockade is a precursor to genocide, as noted by genocide scholar Professor Gregory Stanton of Genocide Watch.

This rise of this unchecked draconian Indian police state is a threat to civil liberties, minority rights, children's rights, and human rights. As argued in the Nation, "Modi is laying the foundation of a fascist Hindutva state." We've seen this before in history and we are seeing it again today, with the rise of militant nationalism, police brutality and impunity, white supremacy, and fascism.

We ask you to make a public statement about the crisis in Kashmir and urge the government of India to lift the curfew, remove the communications blackout, remove people from house arrest; attend the Oct 22 Congressional hearing, sponsor the Kashmir Human Rights Resolution, a peaceful and democratic solution to the Kashmir crisis, in the Senate.

Sincerely,

References:

Vohra, Anchal. "Kashmiri boys taken by Indian army in the night." The Times, September 5, 2019, 5:00pm.

"'Depressed, frightened': Minors held in Kashmir crackdown." Al Jazeera News, 2 Oct 2019
Masih, Niha. "The night the soldiers came: Allegations of abuse surface in Kashmir. " The Washington Post, September 30, 2019 at 11:52 p.m. EDT

[Nair, Preetha](#) "Alienation Was Always There, Now It's Complete': Activist Annie Raja After Visiting J&K."

Wallen, Joe. "Young boys tortured in Kashmir clampdown as new figures show 13,000 teenagers arrested." 25 September 2019, 5:55PM

Update of the Situation of Human Rights in Indian-Administered Kashmir and Pakistan-Administered Kashmir from May 2018 to April 2019, New York. Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). 2019.

The Editorial Board "The U.N. Can't Ignore Kashmir Anymore." New York Times. October 2, 2019.

Torture Indian State's Instrument of Control in Indian administered Jammu and Kashmir Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP) And Jammu Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS). Kashmir. 2019.

Justice For All is a non-governmental, Illinois-registered nonprofit organization based in Chicago, with Consultative Status at the United Nations (DPI) and staff and volunteers in Washington DC, New York, Boston, Texas and other locations. The organization advocates for the global strengthening of human rights and has been instrumental in shaping the discourse around the 'genocide' debate in the U.S. Kashmir Action is a project of Justice For All. Contact info@justiceforall.org