

Pakistan again rakes up Kashmir issue at United Nations

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United Nations: Raking up the Kashmir issue at the UN, Pakistan repeated its call for Security Council resolutions to be implemented in the state and said fulfilling promise of self-determination to the Kashmiri people is "indispensable" to establishing lasting peace and stability in South Asia.

Pakistan's Ambassador to the UN Maleeha Lodhi said that the right to self-determination must be exercised freely without use of coercion or repression, "for instance under foreign occupation" and the legitimate struggle of peoples for self-determination cannot be obfuscated or cast aside by deliberately trying to conflate it with terrorism.

"In my region, South Asia, the decades old dispute of Jammu and Kashmir needs to be resolved in accordance with these fundamental and universal principles," she said in a statement to the Third Committee of the General Assembly on 'Right to self-determination' yesterday.

"The continued suffering of Kashmiri women, children and men should shake the collective conscience of the international community," Lodhi said.

"The 70th Anniversary of the United Nations ought to be a catalyst to spur this body into action, and not just more words. Fulfillment of the long-held promise of self-determination to the Kashmiri people is urgent as well as indispensable to establishing lasting peace and stability in South Asia," she said.

She said Security Council resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir pronounce that the future status of Jammu and Kashmir would be decided through the democratic means of "a free and impartial plebiscite under UN auspices".

These resolutions were supported by Pakistan, India and the international community but still await implementation.

"This is the only way for the people of Kashmir to exercise their inalienable right to self determination. It is a travesty of law and morality that decades after these resolutions were adopted, the people of Jammu and Kashmir continue to be deprived of this fundamental right," she said.

She cited Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's statement during the General Debate in September in which he reiterated his call for the peaceful resolution of the issue, in accordance with the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

Sharif had also said that the Kashmiri people were an "integral part" of the dispute and consultations with them were essential to reach a peaceful settlement.

He had characterised Jammu and Kashmir as the most persistent failure of the United Nations.

- PTI