

Right to Self-Determination Day (5 January 2026)
Message from the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

On 5 January, the people of Pakistan join the people of Jammu and Kashmir in commemorating Right to Self-Determination Day. This date marks the adoption of a United Nations resolution in 1949 that affirmed the disputed nature of Jammu and Kashmir and recognised the right of its people to determine their own future through a free and impartial plebiscite.

More than seven decades later, that solemn commitment remains unfulfilled. The passage of time has neither diminished the validity of the United Nations resolutions nor weakened the legitimacy of the Kashmiri people's demand for self-determination. The continued denial of this right stands in clear contradiction to the principles of the UN Charter and international law.

The situation on the ground in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) remains deeply troubling. Widespread restrictions on political activity and freedom of speech, prolonged detentions and the use of coercive laws have created an atmosphere of fear and impunity. Civilians continue to bear the brunt of violence, while families are displaced and livelihoods disrupted.

In recent years, control over the rivers originating in Jammu and Kashmir has emerged as a grave additional challenge, with serious implications for the lives of Kashmiris and for regional stability. India's unilateral suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty, in disregard of its binding international obligations, represents a dangerous attempt to weaponise water, threatening livelihoods, food security and peace for millions who depend on these shared resources.

Pakistan firmly believes that the Jammu and Kashmir dispute is rooted in the aspirations of the Kashmiri people and cannot be resolved through force or unilateral measures. Lasting peace in South Asia is possible only through dialogue and through the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolutions, without prejudice to the recognised positions of the parties.

On this day, I call upon the international community, and the United Nations in particular, to move beyond expressions of concern and to play an effective role in ensuring that the Kashmiri people are able to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination. Equally important is the need for credible steps to address ongoing human rights violations and to protect civilians.

Pakistan will continue to extend its consistent moral, political and diplomatic support to the people of IIOJK. We stand with them in their just and peaceful struggle for dignity, justice and a future of their own choosing.
