

To: Council
Date: 6 February 2017
Title of Report: **Motions submitted by Councillor Goddard in response to petition on the situation in Kashmir (Item 12)**

Councillor Goddard will be asked to propose his motion submitted in response to this petition

Councillors are asked to debate and reach conclusions on the motion proposed here and/ or the requested actions in the petition.

Motion relating to petition submitted on situation in Kashmir (proposed by Councillor Goddard)

Liberal Democrat member motion

Council note that the issue of Kashmir remains an outstanding item on the agenda of UN Security Council almost 68 years after the resolution of 13th August 1948, which declared the right of the people of the state of Jammu Kashmir to self-determination, despite this the state remains divided by India and Pakistan. The UN has adopted various further resolutions on the issue but it remains unresolved. During the last 68 years, India and Pakistan have been at war with each other and have also acquired nuclear weapons adding to the danger of this conflict. Another consequence of this conflict is that both countries are spending huge amounts of money on military capabilities while one third of the population of the world lives below the poverty lines with limited access to education, healthcare and clean drinking water facilities.

Since 1990 after an uprising in the areas under Indian Administered Kashmir about 80,000 people have lost their lives, many have been disabled for life and about 10,000 people still remain unaccounted for whilst Amnesty International reports that several unmarked graves have been found. Since 8th July 2016 there has been an escalation in the Kashmir valley after the death of few young persons. The people of Kashmir valley came out in very large numbers to pay tributes their slain youth by the security forces that flared up another cycle of violence. The government imposed a strict curfew in Kashmir valley but the protests and killings continued. Until now around over 100s people lost their lives, more than one hundred young and elderly lost eyesight as pellet guns were used to disperse the protesting crowds and about 6,000 people were injured. The businesses remained closed for over few months; hospitals were short of medicines and doctors worked around the clock to provide emergency health care.

People of Kashmir want to live peacefully but this would not be possible until the wishes of the people of Jammu Kashmir to decide their future in a free fair environment

are fulfilled as promised by the UN Security Council resolutions. It is humble request to members of the Council to please support the people of Kashmir who are seeking their right of self-determination and want to live peacefully with their neighbours. With your support, they would be able to achieve their objective of promoting peace in the region.

This Council believes that a permanent resolution to this dispute would bring considerable benefits to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, India and also Pakistan. It would enhance the overall peace and security of the region, as well as bringing comfort to many Oxford's British Kashmiris with their family connections there.

The Council calls on both elected members of Parliament of Oxford to urge Her Majesty's Government to engage with international partners to:

- Urge intervention by the international community through the United Nations to bring a permanent resolution to the state of Jammu and Kashmir by holding a referendum under the UN peace keeping forces, which allows the people of this state, in accordance with the United Nations resolutions, to exercise their right to decide their future free from coercion and intimidation;
- Stop all forms of mistreatment of the people of Kashmir by the Indian forces that includes abduction, torture, murder and rape as instruments in any political cause, and calling on all sides in this dispute to condemn such incidents and to observe in full, international standards of human rights;
- Insist that all sides permit unimpeded access for international human rights monitors;
- Acknowledge Britain's share of responsibility for a dispute that dates from the arrangements for independence, and recognise that it is under an obligation to seek a solution that is based on a commitment to peace, democracy, human rights and mutual tolerance.
- Involve the people of Jammu and Kashmir in any dialogue as this is an international issue and not just bilateral.