



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

Minister of State

Your reference: Council - Kashmir- 20190911
Our reference: N10-69644-2019

Councillor Carolyn Wilkins OBE
Chief Executive
Oldham MBC
Level 3, Civic Centre
West Street,
Oldham
OL1 1UG

21 September 2019

Dear Dr Wilkins,

Thank you for your letter of 16 September to the Prime Minister, on behalf of Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council, about Kashmir. I am replying as Minister of State responsible for South Asia.

Events in Kashmir have regional and international implications and we urge calm and caution from all.

The continued use of detentions and restrictions on communications in India-administered Kashmir is of concern. It is important that individual rights are fully respected and that there is constructive dialogue with affected communities.

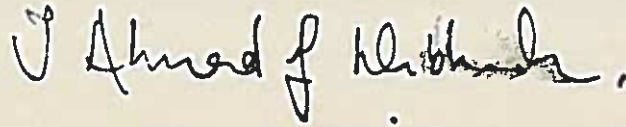
India's revocation of Article 370 has caused considerable interest both in India and internationally. HMG's longstanding position on Kashmir remains unchanged: it is for India and Pakistan to find a lasting political resolution to the Kashmir dispute, taking into account the wishes of the Kashmiri people. This is in accordance with the 1972 Simla agreement, which was agreed between India and Pakistan, subsequent to the United Nations Security Council Resolution 47.

It is for India and Pakistan to find a lasting political resolution on Kashmir and it would be for both parties to agree if they wanted any external mediation on Kashmir.

We have spoken with the Indian Government on a number of occasions since 5 August. The Prime Minister has spoken to both Prime Minister Modi of India and Prime Minister Imran Khan of Pakistan. He underlined to both the importance of resolving issues through dialogue. On 7 August, in a telephone call with Indian Foreign Minister Jaishankar, the Foreign Secretary expressed the UK's concerns around the situation in India-administered Kashmir and called for calm. Prior to this, I met Indian High Commissioner Ruchi Ghanashyam to discuss the situation.

We continue to follow the situation closely.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Ahmad of Wimbledon", written in a cursive style.

LORD (TARIQ) AHMAD OF WIMBLEDON
Minister of State for the Commonwealth, UN and South Asia
Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict