

Kashmir: The Definitive Solution

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The peaceful settlement of the Kashmir problem is a necessity. Its solution will settle the fractious relationship between the sisterly neighbors, India and Pakistan. Those two countries are true siblings. The countries known as Pakistan, and India used to be a single nation in all aspects, demographically and otherwise. Despite the partition, they remain brothers.

The partition was a colonial conspiracy. The colonial power did not wish to leave behind such a mighty nation of great population, vast geographical size and huge potential. It was the colonialists who stoked the fires of strife between the different sects and communities. The proof of this is the fact that, before colonialism, those communities had lived peacefully together in the Indian Subcontinent.

The culprit in the sectarian massacres and the violent, blood-stained confrontations was the British colonialism.

The colonialist conspiracy caused the situation to escalate to a point where partition, on the basis of religion, became the only solution. The notion of partition itself is a reactionary and colonialist one. Sadly, the clashes between the adherents of various religions, the torching and demolition of houses of prayer continue unabated within India and Pakistan even after the partition.

It is not in the interest of the people of the Subcontinent to continue with this fragmentation and the clashes that squander their resources. It is a real shame that they continue killing each other.

Nevertheless, a practical and pragmatic solution will impose itself in response to the requirements of the age of globalization. The map of the world will be redrawn. New giant entities will come into being. The nation-state, that has become incapable of survival in the age of major challenges and fierce competition, will inevitably disappear.

The new map of the world will be formed on a geographical and regional basis not on emotional, sectarian or ethnic one. Its new component parts are the giant entities like the African Union, the European Union, the Commonwealth of Independent States and ASEAN. The states of the Indian Subcontinent will, of necessity, reunite to form such a giant entity.

Kashmir:

Some people disdain the sacrifices of others. When someone gives his blood, or life itself, for a cause, they consider him irresponsible. They qualify those sacrifices as hateful terrorism. Those people cannot act as mediators for the solution of the problem of Kashmir or any other problem for that matter. People, Muslims or Hindus, Buddhists or Sikhs, may sacrifice their lives for what they consider a worthy cause. We must show respect for those sacrifices.

To look down on them with disdain will not contribute to the solution of the problem of Kashmir or any other world problem.

It has become clear to the whole world, and to the peoples of the region, that there exist three distinct entities; India, Pakistan and Kashmir. This is a firm foundation on which to build the solution of the problem.

The circumstances and situations of the hundreds of states that make up the Subcontinent used to be similar. This is no longer the case. Even the similarities between Kashmir, Hyderabad and Jonaghad no longer exist.

The status of Hyderabad and Jonaghad was determined by popular plebiscite in accordance with the principles of partition that divided the Subcontinent into India and Pakistan. It is unproductive to use the pretext that the independence of Kashmir may give rise to separatist tendencies in other states.

This simply cannot happen. The status of all the other states was definitively determined in accordance with the principles of partition, and in accordance with the subsequent Security Council resolutions which established the principle of popular plebiscite. Popular consultations were held in the other states. In view of the existence of these international resolutions and principles, no state governor, or a local parliament can legally make a decision that runs counter to them.

Kashmir's Specificity:

Despite the fact that it has the same population mix (Aryans, Mongols, Turkic and Afghans) and the same linguistic multiplicity of the other parts of the Indian Subcontinent, Kashmir has its particular history. It was characterized by conflict between Buddhists and Brahmins. That was followed by an era where Hindu culture was dominant. The Islamic stage followed after Islam came to Kashmir.

One of the specific characteristics of Kashmir was its sale to a feudal dynasty under the British colonial rule. That family was its sole owner for nearly a century. Why was Kashmir given a much larger measure of self rule? Why was Kashmir

treated as an exception when the Subcontinent was divided into India and Pakistan?

Why was the status of the two other states that were considered exceptional cases (Hyderabad and Jonaghad) settled while that of Kashmir was left unsettled? Why does the head of government of Kashmir carry the title of prime minister like the head of the government of India? Why does Kashmir have its own flag and its own parliament? All this goes to prove that Kashmir is unique and distinct. Its history and circumstances are different from those of the other states. It is counterproductive to argue about the number of the adherents of this or that religion.

The question of religion in the Indian Subcontinent is a thorny one of extreme complexity. It is the card used by the colonial power in its policy of “divide and rule” in order to dismember that giant entity and divide it into several warring countries. India is not a Hindu state. It is a multi-religious country. It is Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist and Sikh. It is illogical to portray every conflict as one between Muslims and Hindus. Kashmir is not solely a Muslim state. It is Hindu, Muslim, and Buddhist and belongs to all the communities that live in it. If the rule is that Muslims belong to Pakistan while Hindus belong to India, the Subcontinent will be further fragmented. It will never enjoy stability and the solution will continue to elude us.

This illogical and harmful notion must be written off once and for all. It is at the root of the conflict in Kashmir. All Kashmiris, whether Muslims or Hindus, belong to Kashmir. It is worth noting that no logical solution has been proposed. All that is put forward is emotional and devoid of logic. Whenever the problem is debated, the starting point is an attack on the adherents of the other religion.

The introduction of religion into the debate is a clear proof of the lack of seriousness in dealing with the problem and its possible solution. It is not in the religion, ethnicity or the common language that the solution will be found.

It can only be found in the common interest of the inhabitants of Kashmir. In this age of globalization, common faith, language or ethnicity are no longer the ties that bind peoples. Common interests are. Common interests now unite peoples of different religions, races and languages.

Those emotional ties fade in comparison to common interests. A sincere, serious and impartial attempt at resolving the question of Kashmir must not overlook the interests of the countries neighboring it. Those interests are rarely mentioned. They are cloaked in religious and other emotional considerations. Kashmir is a

very important source of water. There are four countries that have borders with Kashmir.

They have strategic security interests in Kashmir. It is unfair to portray religious belief, or exploit it, as the sole cause of the problem without giving due regard to the other causes. The people of Kashmir must not be sacrificed on the altar of narrow, selfish interests.

Kashmir must belong to all Kashmiris. It will be a new sisterly neighbor of both India and Pakistan. Just like Nepal and Bhutan, it will serve as a buffer zone between the four states bordering it. This will strengthen peace in the region by creating a separation zone between India and China, and Pakistan and Afghanistan. The independence of Timor L'Este is a good example to follow.

The map of the world will soon contain nothing but giant entities. Nation-states will disappear, in view of the fact that they are no longer capable to face the challenges of globalization. Therefore, the independence of Kashmir will not cause dreaded shockwaves it would have caused before the age of globalization. Kashmir, Bhutan, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Maldives, Sri Lanka and India will all be subsumed in a future giant entity of the Indian subcontinent along the lines of the European Union, African Union, and ASEAN.

The states of the Indian subcontinent will have no future in the age of globalization unless they unite in an entity that will ensure their strength at a time when the nation state no longer has a place, even if it is as strong economically and technologically as Germany or France. Germany, France, and other European states can only survive within a European Union that can withstand the challenges of globalization.

Each one of the giant entities that will replace the nation states and make up the new world, will have its single army, security structures, single market, single currency, single central bank, and most importantly a single negotiating position with the other similar giant entities.

The nation state is no longer able to negotiate the tortuous paths of the globalize world. This is the best solution for the peoples of the region who share the same destiny. The reactionary methods employed in the paths have brought those peoples nothing but tragedies and destruction. Long live Kashmir as an independent sovereign state, home for all Kashmiris, Muslims, Hindus, and others.