



To,
Ms Nadia Murad
And
Mr Denis Mukwege
Co-Presidents of the G7 Gender Advisory Council

The Hague, 22nd August 2019

Subject: G7 Summit an Opportune Moment to address the escalation of tension in Kashmir region causing a new wave of violence and suffering of women in Kashmir. Advisory Council's call for action is timely to address the Promote I's Recommendations Concerning Women's Rights in Kashmir

Dear Ms Nadia Murad and Mr Denis Mukwege,

On behalf of [Gender Concerns International](http://www.genderconcerns.org), I wholeheartedly congratulate G7 Gender Equality Advisory Council (GEAC) on the release of their recommendations for advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and Call to Action. Gender Concerns International supports the recommendations made and therefore urges that the GEAC ensures that the G7 summit will pay special attention to the recent escalation of tension between India and Pakistan and its impact on women and girls.

- Under the heavy deployment of military forces, recent house raids and detention of thousands of Kashmiri men have left many Kashmiri women particularly defenseless and vulnerable to the abuses associated with armed conflict in fragile democracies and conflict zones.
- In addition, women in Kashmir are widely humiliated as physical commodities based on their beauty and trafficked to men in India. This degradation of women in one of the largest democracies in the world is particularly concerning as a backlash to the global gender equality achievement benchmarks.

Therefore, I kindly urge the G7 Advisory Council to ensure that all countries participating in this weekend's G7 summit reaffirm their commitment to endorsing gender equality and supporting recommendations made, with a particular reference to the deteriorating security situation in Kashmir.

Under UNSCR 1325, the international community is obliged to protect women in conflict zones and regions and prevent them against violence, intimidation and various forms of abuse.

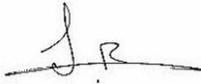
Importantly, the G7 meeting is an opportune moment for the Advisory Council to highlight the escalating conflict in the Kashmir region and the continued suffering faced by Kashmiri women. This longstanding crisis requires the international community to come together and actively work to support de-escalation of the situation and promote a peaceful solution, with a specific focus on improving the safety and security of the regions' most vulnerable groups, including women and girls.

Gender Concerns International is a signatory of the Dutch National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 and is committed to supporting women in conflict zones working in countries like Afghanistan, Myanmar, Libya, Sierra Leon, Tunisia and Morocco.

The organization has been working with women activists from both sides of Kashmir but most importantly feminist groups in India and Pakistan since 2005 on a low profile. The emergence of current crisis that has opened a new chapter of suffering for women in Kashmir demands that the silence is no longer an option.

I hope you appreciate our efforts in highlighting the helpless position of women in Kashmir, given the complex nature of this conflict. We trust and contribute to your equality commitment at the auspicious occasion of G7 Summit. Thank you,

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Bano', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

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