



Speech By  
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**MEMBER FOR SOUTH BRISBANE**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### Kashmir

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (6.22 pm): We are joined in the gallery today by members of the Kashmiri community here in Brisbane as well as supporters from the Pakistani community. I join the Kashmiri community as well as human rights advocates and UN special rapporteurs in condemning the violence and repression that has unfolded in Kashmir over many decades, and I share my call for azadi—freedom. It has now been nearly four years since the revocation of the special status of Kashmir by the Indian government—one of the greatest attacks on the sovereignty of Kashmiris in modern times. The revocation has led to a new wave of repression and violence, restrictions on freedom of expression, the press and the internet, and the detention of journalists. The UN’s Special Rapporteur on minority issues said—

The loss of autonomy and the imposition of direct rule by the Government in New Delhi suggests the people of Jammu and Kashmir no longer have their own government and have lost power to legislate or amend laws in the region to ensure the protection of their rights ...

Forced demographic changes, new rules allowing outsiders to buy property and register to vote in Kashmir, and literal bulldozer politics are stripping Kashmiris of their land, homes and resources. The rates of sexual violence against Kashmiri women have been amongst the highest in the world’s conflict zones. The perverse use of the Public Safety Act has led to illegal arrests and detention of Kashmiri journalists, stripping people of their voice and preventing alerts of violence and atrocities from reaching the world. I know that members of the Kashmiri diaspora here, the broader South Asian diaspora and people worldwide are watching on in horror. It is not everyday people who are responsible for the violence and repression but rather military and political elites who benefit from dispossession and violence while everyday people suffer.

The Kashmiri community in Kashmir, around the world and here have remained defiant and strong and continue to resist. They continue to fight for their freedom and sovereignty. With the G20 soon to be hosted in the Kashmiri city of Srinagar, the Kashmiri diaspora is calling on the Australian government to urgently raise the issue of Kashmir with the Indian government. I add my voice to these calls to: immediately lift the military siege and withdraw the estimated 900,000 Indian Army troops currently stationed in Kashmir; halt demographic changes that are forcing Kashmiris off their land; reinstate article 370 to grant Kashmir autonomy; release Kashmir journalist Fahad Shah and all other journalists and human rights defenders; allow freedom of speech and end harassment of political activists and human rights activists and journalists; investigate and prosecute all cases of sexual violence allegedly perpetrated by state and non-state actors; and provide reparations to victims. I express my immense gratitude to the Kashmir community for joining us here today and for your ongoing fight for freedom and justice, which we wholeheartedly support you in. Azadi.