An Appeal To The President of Pakistan And The Prime Minister of India On Jammu-Kashmir By The Front For Trilateral Resolution Of Jammu-Kashmir Problem

1. The Front for the trilateral resolution of Jammu-Kashmir problem (henceforth the front) offers its hearty greetings on the occasion of your informal meeting at New Delhi on April 17, 2005, which is, according to the statements made by both of you, likely to discuss important Indo-Pak issues, particularly the one concerning Jammu-Kashmir.

2. Looking back at the utterances and actions of New Delhi and Islamabad with regard to Jammu-Kashmir during the past two years, we appreciate and welcome the relaxation and confidence building steps, like the withdrawal of the armed forces of the two countries (then standing in an eyeball to eyeball position), back to their respective barracks, exchange of a number of goodwill delegations between the two countries, including the two sides of Jammu-Kashmir on the line of control, release of each other's prisoners and so on and so forth, taken by the two sides with the purpose of restoring normal relations between them and bringing a tension-free atmosphere in Jammu-Kashmir, particularly the valley.

3. The Front, however, feels that the speed of Indo-Pak initiatives and activities is so slow and halting as to match with the globally most dangerous flash-point nature of our problem (i.e., the issue of Jammu-Kashmir). We earnestly plead with both of you to consider this highly important world (including India and Pakistan) problem in the context of danger to world peace, possibilities of nuclear confrontation, with its devastating effects on one-fifth of the human community.

4. The Front holds that in our age arising after the collapse of the communist system and the rise of US as a single superpower around 1990's, world peace (vision of the 21st century) has become the prime need of the human community. This need emerges from our existing global reality where, mankind confronted with environmental degradation, on the one hand, and ever-widening economic and political inequality in human society, on the other, needs to close its ranks by plugging all sorts of social, national, political, economical and cultural cleavages.

The human cleavages can, as shown by experience, be mended by sorting out all disputed issues on a just basis. And a just basis is the only one that discards the rule of gun, as well as the principle holding political power or capital (or money) as being the deciding factor in human society.

5. The Front maintains that the Jammu-Kashmir problem is a problem whose basic cause lies in the keen contention between the pro-Hindu approach represented by the pre-1947 Congress and the Muslim-oriented Muslim-League. Thus, the sharp conflict between these two religion-based organisations, resulted in the partition of united India. The partition brought in a host of unresolved problems, including the most complicated one, i.e., Jammu-Kashmir, which still remains unanswered between India and Pakistan.

6. The Front regards that, at this moment, the process of relaxation and confidence building measures, despite a number of appreciable Indo-Pak moves remains highly fragile. It will, and can, become vibrant and lively when the three parties, i.e., India, Pakistan and Jammu-Kashmir people, are brought in the dialogue process. If the forces, holding Jammu-Kashmir as a disputed issue, are not involved the goodwill generated by the relaxation and confidence building measures will get adversely affected.

7. The Front is of the opinion that relaxation and confidence building measures alone cannot change the ground reality. The ground situation will start changing when the trilateral dialogue process for the resolution of Jammu-Kashmir problem takes its due course.

8. The Front feels that the peace process between India and Pakistan concerning the Jammu-Kashmir issue will become effective only when, in addition to the relaxation and confidence building measures already adopted, the following steps are taken in Jammu-Kashmir, particularly in the valley. These steps are: the ending of all human rights violations; release of all political detenus; withdrawal of Disturbed Areas Act and Armed Forces Special Powers Act, etc., unilateral ceasefire and withdrawal of Indian forces deployed in Kashmir valley to their barracks; appointment of a jointly agreed Indo-Pak commission to investigate into the complaints of human rights violations committed by the three sides, i.e., India, Pakistan and the militant groups and to recommend proper compensation to all victims or, in case of their death, to their families by the concerned violator or offender. In case of violations by militant groups, the compensation to be paid by India and Pakistan jointly.

9. The Front firmly believes that a fatal eco-bio crisis is hanging over our planet and that, in the coming days, both India and Pakistan will, just like all other countries, have to face the same life and death problems, like the consequences of global warming, falling water levels, increasing pollution of the air and water, degradation of arable land, falling land productivity, shrinking global forest cover (now standing far below the required minimum level), threat to bio-diversity with rapid disappearing of many species, increasing economic and cultural disparity, unbridgeable economic, cultural and political gap between the haves and the have-nots, criminalisation of politics, political parties and politicians, fastly increasing human population, spreading urbanisation and decreasing agricultural land, slumisations of the cities, and so on. But very little attention is being paid towards these problems. They do not form a part of even our official agendas. Unless these problems are addressed seriously and quickly, all the so many human achievements in the domain of science, technology, art and culture, would not be of much avail. Given this realistic context, both India and Pakistan should focus their first attention on the present disastrous eco-bio crisis.

There is fear among certain informed circles that, with the day-to-day worsening state of the environment and its various components, particularly water, coupled with the melting of the biggest Himalian Glacier, the decline of water flow in Sindh, Jehlam and Chinab rivers, given the claim made by the Jammu-Kashmir government that it can build power projects by using the waters of these rivers, can generate tension between India and Pakistan, which considers the waters of these rivers as its monopoly as the later has, by virtue of 1961-Indus Water Treaty, surrendered its right of water over Ravi, Sutlaj and Bias rivers to India.

10. The Front takes the view that, after the taking of above-said measures, the next task before the parties concerned is to sort out the modalities which do provide a guideline for the solution of Jammu-Kashmir problem.

11. The Front believes that, before sorting out the necessary modalities, the parties concerned should give their due attention to the below-noted three necessary facts.

12. One is that, on the basic of the historical experience of classical colonialism (like the British, French, etc.) in general and the post-1947 behavior of superpowerism (represented by the US and the Soviet Union from 1945-1990), and by the single superpower, the US, after 1990, in particular, one can easily discern, that the present US superpowerism is the most aggressive, ruthless, cunning and anti-human force of our age which represents only a narrow circle of big business (billionaires and trillionaires) and top politicians (who are hired agents of big business) and which oppresses and exploits the whole world people, including the Americans and Europeans, on the one hand, and degrades and destroys environmental resources, on the other.

The second fact is that at the present moment, the US superpowerism is pre-occupied by two top international priorities. One is to rout world ‘terrorism’ and the other is to form an undeclared military and economic alliance against China concerning the two above-said strategic tasks. It considers Pakistan as its tactical ally in its war on world terrorism, while regarding India, just like Japan, as a strategic ally in its undeclared military and economic alliance against China.

The third fact is that the Indian state’s pronounced vision of superpowerism or its vision of acting as a junior partner to all-pervasive US superpowerism (which are the visions of the 20th century when war occupied the first position) are detrimental for the cause of Indian, South Asian and the world people. Similarly, Pakistan’s present association as a partner in the US-led international front against world terrorism is highly damaging to the interests of Pakistan, South Asian and the world

people. True, Pakistan's present role is only a tactical move to prevent US hostility towards it, to secure superior technological weapons and to get US support in its dispute with India over Jammu-Kashmir, yet the resolution of its dispute with India over Jammu-Kashmir, can provide it an outlet to adopt an independent position in the international matters, including Jammu-Kashmir.

13. The Front sets forth the following modalities for the resolution of Jammu-Kashmir proble: (a) Accepting Jammu-Kashmir as a human problem, (b) Characterising it as a trilateral question, involving the people of India, Pakistan and Jammu-Kashmir, (c) Rejecting all military forms and adoption of a peaceful path by signing a no war Indo-Pak pact, (d) Maintaining the unity and integrity of three units involved in the dispute, i.e., India, Pakistan and Jammu-Kashmir, (e) Discarding of all communal and divisive proposals, (f) Getting rid of all preconceived notions, like Jammu-Kashmir as an integral part of India or Jammu-Kashmir as a jugular vein of Pakistan, (g) Keeping in view the same genetic code of the people of India, Pakistan and Jammu-Kashmir, (h) Taking into account the similar current problems, like poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, etc., faced by the people of the two countries, (i) Adopting the perspective of a common future for the people of India, Pakistan and Jammu-Kashmir, and (j) Avoiding every foreign intervention in the process of resolving Jammu-Kashmir problem.

14. Proceeding from the above modalities, the most important task before the three parties concerned is to sort out a humanistic and compromising solution to the problem of Jammu-Kashmir, a solution that reconciles the aspirations and interests of the three parties concerned, defends their respective national honour and opens for them the high gates of a prosperous future.

On our behalf, we suggest the following 3-point proposal for a humanistic solution. The proposal holds:

(a) That the foreign and defence matters of Jammu-Kashmir be handled jointly by India and Pakistan or by an Indo-Pak condominium;

(b) That the state of Jammu-Kashmir be made an independent state, with sovereign powers in all matters except defence and foreign affairs (to be handled by the Indo-Pak condominium); and

(c) That all ethnic communities in Jammu-Kashmir, whether located on the Indian or the Pakistani side of the line of control, be given the maximum-possible autonomy.

April 15, 2005