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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by the Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[13 February 2012]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

Education, peace and development in Jammu and Kashmir

Hallmark of education in Jammu & Kashmir is that it is the only state in India where there is free education from primary to post-graduation level. The state ranks among the few states in India where more students study in the English medium. The literacy rate is quite appreciable particularly among the females. The state has a vast network of primary and secondary schools. There are 11,633 government schools and 2,047 private schools, with over 1 million students including 0.45 million female students, undergoing school education. However, recently there has been expansion in the institutions of higher learning and a new emphasis has been placed in the capacity building and empowerment of educated youth in the state. The Federal government approved on 4 August 2011 a special higher education scholarship scheme to provide 5,000 free scholarships per year varying from Rs. 30,000 (600 US Dollars) to Rs. 3 lakhs (6,000 US Dollars) to students from the state going for higher studies outside the state. (Hindustan Times 14 December 2011. p12). The Federal government has now under a special scheme asked India's top public sector undertakings and banks to train and subsequently offer jobs to youths from Jammu & Kashmir. The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) is the nodal agency to train the youth for nine months at a cost of Rs. 2.5 lakhs (5,000 US Dollars) per each person. (Hindustan Times 7 December 2011.p 21).

The Jammu & Kashmir state has two Central Universities, four full fledged state Universities and three state aided Public Universities. In terms of infrastructure and academic programs, the two state Universities of Jammu and Kashmir have been awarded A grade by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). In order to extend the facilities of higher and university education beyond the walls of the traditional universities to the far flung and backward areas of the state, the concept of Satellite and Extended campuses has been put in place. Thus, two Satellite Campuses have been set up in North and South Kashmir respectively, besides one campus each in Leh and Kargil. In Jammu division, three Satellite Campuses in Udhampur, Bhadarwah and Kishtwar are already functional. New Satellite Campuses are also being set up in Ramnagar, Poonch and Kathua districts of Jammu division. The state government has already approved an expenditure of Rs.202 crores (about 42 million US Dollars) for these Satellite and Extended Campuses.

The education at the College level (graduation) is receiving special attention. There are more than 72 Government Degree colleges (35 each in Kashmir and Jammu Divisions and one each in Leh and Kargil districts) and 14 private colleges. Besides, creation of 32 new Degree colleges has been approved by the state government. The Federal government of India has recently allocated Rs. 40 crores (8.2 million US Dollars) as special assistance for the improvement of the infrastructure of Degree Colleges. In a bid to include the Colleges within the information Communication Technology Mission, 31 Colleges were provided Broadband facilities through Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL). In order to boost the college level education in the backward areas the concept of 'Model Colleges' has been introduced. Recently, 11 colleges under Central (Federal) Scheme for 'Model Colleges in Backward Areas' and 12 colleges under State Plan Scheme were sponsored .

As regards the professional and technical education, there are 12 Government Polytechnics, 2 Veterinary colleges (one each in Jammu and Srinagar), 2 Government Dental colleges (one each in Jammu and Srinagar) , 2 Government and 2 Private Medical Colleges (one each in Jammu and Srinagar, 1 Ayurvedic Medicine college in Jammu, 2 universities of Agricultural Science and Technology (one each in Jammu and Srinagar), 1 National Institute of Technology (NIT) at Srinagar and 3 private Engineering Colleges (2 in Jammu and 1 in Kashmir). The Srinagar NIT is one of the 18 Regional Engineering

Colleges sponsored by the Federal government and it acquired the status of NIT and Deemed University in August 2003.

In order to expand the educational facilities and bring these closer to the new market requirements of the modern times new courses have been introduced in the Universities and Colleges in the state. These include courses in food technology, bio-resources, pharmacy, human genetics, geo-informatics, physical education, remote sensing, business administration computer and electronics. These courses are available at the post-graduate level and doctorate level in the Universities. These facilities have gradually generated an atmosphere of peace, security and development in the state and society of Kashmir.

The state government is providing special financial assistance to enhance the physical infrastructure in the schools to develop scientific temper among the youths. The state is constructing 166 Science laboratories in Higher Secondary schools of the state. The state is also constructing a huge building for Human Genetic Research Centre and Counseling which is expected to be functional by the end of this year. In this backdrop the 5th and 6th J&K Science Congress was held in the Universities of Kashmir and Jammu respectively during the last two years. Five young scientists were awarded 'Young Scientists Award' during these Congresses. Besides, 300 Science students were awarded scholarships which raised the level of interest and enthusiasm among the young students. The special assistance has been provided to the Universities to undertake 18 new research and developmental projects. During the last three years more than 200 science exhibitions, debates and competitions were held in the different parts of the state.

The special emphasis on technical education and raising the infrastructure to provide the technical education is having deep impact on the youth who are realizing the potential of participation in these activities. There are already 47 government Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) in J&K state (22 in Kashmir, 23 in Jammu and 1 each in Leh and Kargil districts). Under the Prime Minister's Reconstruction Program 9 new Women's ITIs, 11 new Women's training wings have been established. About 89 Trade Units have been introduced. The intake capacity of 2,096 seats has been created during the last one year. During the last one year 1176 candidates were trained in 14 Government ITI's. of the state. The construction of Polytechnic institutes in remote and far flung Leh and Kargil areas of Ladakh has been completed. In these ITIs about 2,217 additional seats have been created out of which 820 seats have been exclusively reserved for women.

The Jammu & Kashmir state has for the last one year embarked on 'Skill Development Mission' which has identified the thrust areas in the Agriculture and Horticulture, Agro and Food Processing, Tourism and Hospitality, Floriculture, Handicrafts, Handlooms, Animal and Sheep Husbandry, Small and Medium Scale Industry, information Technology, Power including Renewable Energy etc. An action plan for imparting skill training program to 4 million people by the year 2022 is being prepared. The intake capacity in ITI sector has been increased from 4,600 to 15,179 in the year 2010-2011. Over 8,000 youth per year are being trained per year inside and outside the state by various vocational training providers. During the last one year 3,200 youths have already been trained and 4,500 are undergoing the training.

Notwithstanding, such impressive growth of modern scientific and professional/ technical education in Jammu and Kashmir, the state has been reeling under the trauma of extremism, militancy and terrorism. Terror has become a lucrative industry as criminals and bandits are taking advantage of militancy indulging in kidnappings, rape, murder and illegal occupation of properties. The mushrooming of madrassas (Islamic seminaries) in the state during the last two decades and the high level of infiltration of Jamaat-i-Islami cadres deeply soaked in the Ahl-e-Hadis / Wahabi ideology in the state education sector (universities, colleges, schools etc) have been instrumental in the rise of extremism and militancy, as the youths are getting indoctrinated with the ideology of hate and obscurantism. And the problem is

accentuated by the dubious role of ‘conflict entrepreneurs’ who have been masquerading as the so called human rights defenders, civil society groups, academia and media due to their vested interest in securing publicity and funding.

The state government with over 300,000 people on its rolls, leaving aside public and private sector undertakings, banks etc. and law and order/security services, has been bearing the expenditure of Rs. 14,500 crores (294 million US Dollars) on its annual wages bill, as against the local annual revenue of Rs. 4,500 crores (92 million US Dollars) only. It is high time that the state and federal governments, civil society, media, academia and think tanks take note of the actual situation and make an objective assessment of the malaise of terrorism and its causes, which has been afflicting the state for over 22 years now. Clearly the extraneous factors rather than any social or economic deprivation are at the root of this problem. Once a proper diagnosis of the malaise is done, its remedy will not be far off.
