

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 12, 2020

The Honorable Michael R. Pompeo
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo,

We write as longtime friends of India regarding some of the troubling actions taken by the current government. More than six months after Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government unilaterally revoked the autonomy of Jammu and Kashmir, the government continues to block most internet in the region. India has now imposed the longest-ever internet shut down by a democracy, disrupting access to medical care, business, and education for seven million people. Hundreds of Kashmiris remain in "preventive detention," including key political figures.

These actions have severe consequences. That is why, in the Fiscal Year 2020 State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs appropriations report, the Congress urged the Indian government to:

- (1) fully restore telecommunications and internet services;
- (2) lift its lockdown and curfew; and
- (3) release individuals detained pursuant to the Indian government's revocation of Article 370 of the Indian constitution.

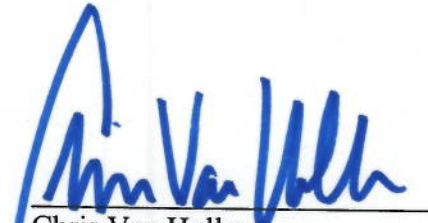
In addition, the Indian government has taken other troubling steps that threaten the rights of certain religious minorities and the secular character of the state. This includes the passage of the controversial Citizenship Amendment Act, which is being challenged in India's Supreme Court.

Therefore, we respectfully request an assessment of the following items within 30 days:


- (1) the number of individuals detained by the Indian Government for political purposes due to India's revocation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution with respect to Jammu and Kashmir, including an assessment, to the extent practicable, of whether detainees endure torture or other forms of mistreatment;

- (2) the Government of India's restrictions on communications in Jammu and Kashmir, including access to the internet and cellular telephone services;
- (3) the level of access to Jammu and Kashmir the Indian government grants to independent observers, foreign diplomats and consular agents, foreign journalists, international organizations, and representatives of nongovernmental organizations;
- (4) restrictions on religious freedom in Jammu and Kashmir; and,
- (5) the number of individuals -- including the number of religious, ethnic and other minorities -- at risk of statelessness, arbitrary deprivation or denial of nationality, expulsion or arbitrary detention pursuant to the Government of India's latest National Register of Citizens list, and any excessive use of force by Indian authorities against demonstrators opposing the Citizenship Amendment Act.


Sincerely,



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Todd Young
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Lindsey O. Graham
United States Senator