



## **STATEMENT SOCIETY FOR SECULAR PAKISTAN**

January 11, 2020

KARACHI: The Society for Secular Pakistan, which upholds religion as a personal matter and stands for equal rights for all citizens regardless of religion or sect, expresses solidarity with fellow secularists in neighbouring India who are fighting for similar rights.

Upholding the universally accepted fundamental right to non-violent protest, the Society expresses deep concern about the government of India's continuing lockdown over Kashmir where harsh police and army actions have been used against unarmed Kashmiris and discriminatory laws enacted on citizenship. Most recently, the world has watched the crackdown on non-violent protesters on campuses across India. These actions signal majoritarian fascism reminiscent of the rise of Nazism in Germany in the 1930s. We cannot stand by and allow this to happen in our region today.

The Pakistan experience over the past decades shows that using religion for political purposes and unleashing brute force to crush political dissent leads to long-lasting, harmful repercussions at home and abroad.

Since its inception in February 2014 initially as the Forum for Secular Pakistan, this Society has consistently stood with democratic forces and against injustice at home. In the same spirit, we condemn the rising fascism in India, deplore the highhanded tactics of the Modi government, and express complete solidarity with non-violent protesters, particularly students, in India.

**President: Dr. S. Haroon Ahmed**

General Secretary (officiating): Iqbal Alavi

Representative members: Mazhar Saeed, Hilda Saeed, Anis Haroon, Beena Sarwar, Naghma Iqtidar.