



CONGRESSMAN BRAD SHERMAN

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November 22, 2019

The Honorable Alice Wells
Acting Assistant Secretary
Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs
U.S. Department of State 2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C., 20520

Dear Acting Assistant Secretary Wells:

I am writing to follow up on the October 22, 2019 House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia's hearing on South Asian Human Rights.

At that hearing, I said that one reason I am so concerned about the situation in Kashmir is because there is a lack of reliable information coming from the region. I also asked you if U.S. diplomats have been able to visit Kashmir to report on the situation on the ground since August 5, 2019. In response, you said the United States has requested permission to visit Kashmir, but the Indian government has denied those requests.

I wanted to follow up with you on this point. In particular, I would like you to answer three questions:

- 1) Have U.S. diplomats been permitted to visit Kashmir since August 5, 2019?
- 2) How many times has the United States officially requested permission for U.S. diplomats to visit Kashmir since August 5, 2019?
- 3) What are the reasons the Indian government has given for refusing to grant U.S. diplomats permission to visit Kashmir?

Indian government officials have indicated that U.S. diplomats have not been granted permission to visit Kashmir due to the security situation on the ground. But the Indian government allowed certain, select European Union Members of Parliament to visit Kashmir in October 2019. In light of this, the Indian government should allow U.S. diplomats to visit Kashmir.

At the October 22nd hearing, Members of the Subcommittee also requested a classified briefing from the State Department and Office of the Director of Intelligence regarding Kashmir. I would like to formally request that the State Department and Intelligence Community provide this classified briefing to Members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and other interested Members of Congress. I ask that you direct your staff to work with my Subcommittee Director, Don MacDonald (Don.Macdonald@mail.house.gov), to find a mutually convenient time to schedule this briefing.

Thank you for your attention to these issues.

Sincerely,



Brad Sherman
Member of Congress