

Pakistan has lost international support on Kashmir: Ex Pak envoy

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Washington: Pakistan no longer enjoys international support on Kashmir and is unlikely to get an approval for a referendum in the region from the UN Security Council, a former Pakistani envoy to the US has said.

"Kashmir is an emotive issue in Pakistan because of the failure of its leaders to inform their people that Pakistan no longer enjoys international support on the matter," said Husain Haqqani, former Pakistani Ambassador to the US.

Haqqani, who is currently director of South and Central Asia at the Hudson Institute, said for years Pakistan has sought international support for its position that Kashmir's future must be resolved through dialogue with India and a plebiscite among the Kashmiri people.

India does not even want to discuss the dispute without the end of Pakistan-sponsored terror, he added.

"What most Pakistanis do not know is that the last United Nations Security Council resolution on Kashmir was passed in 1957 and Pakistan could not win support for a referendum in Kashmir today if it asked for a new vote at the United Nations," Haqqani said in an op-ed published on the website of the Hudson Institute, a US-think tank.

"Instead of accepting that it might be better for India and Pakistan to normalise relations by expanding trade and cross-border travel, Pakistani hardliners have stuck to a 'Kashmir first' mantra, which they know is unrealistic," said Haqqani, who was at the loggerheads with the powerful Army when in office.

Posturing on Kashmir gets Pakistan nowhere but its leaders feel they need to do it any way to maintain support from Islamists and the military at home, he said.

According to Haqqani, hardliners in an increasingly self-confident India play on Indians' frustration with Pakistani state support for jihadis, such as those responsible for terrorist attacks in Mumbai in 2008.

"There is empty talk of 'teaching Pakistan a lesson' without acknowledging that teaching military lessons to nations armed with nuclear weapons is never easy. Indians could learn from the United States' frustrations with North Korea," he said.

- PTI