

## UN rights chief 'strongly condemns' attack on Indian security forces in Kashmir

The top United Nations human rights official has strongly condemned the suicide bomb attack against Indian security forces in Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir on 14 February and has called on authorities to bring those responsible to justice.

In Geneva on Tuesday, Rupert Colville, Spokesperson for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), said the UN was also saddened by the further loss of life reported from subsequent gun battles in Pulwama yesterday, 18 February, which is reported to have claimed 9 more lives.

"We hope escalating tensions between the two nuclear-armed neighbours will not add further to the insecurity in the region," he said.

Mr. Colville said the High Commissioner, Michelle Bachelet, is also concerned by reports from India that some elements are using the Pulwama attack as justification for threats and potential acts of violence targeting Kashmiri and Muslim communities living in different parts of India.

"We acknowledge actions taken by the Indian authorities to tackle these incidents and we hope that the Government will continue to take steps to protect people from all forms of harm that may be directed at them on account of their ethnicity or identity," he stressed.