

US backs India hours before UNSC's take on Masood Azhar



Hours before the UNSC's crucial decision on Masood Azhar today evening, the United States backed India by saying that the Jaish-e-Mohammed chief meets all criteria to be announced as a "global terrorist", and failing to do so will be "against regional stability and peace".

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is scheduled to deliver the final decision on whether it declares Jaish-e-Mohammed chief Masood Azhar as a global terrorist as petitioned by India, or not ? on Tuesday evening. The UNSC's decision on 50-year-old Azhar is considered crucial, as India intensified the stand global ban on the JeM head after the terror outfit claimed responsibility for carrying out the Pulwama attack on CRPF convoy, killing 40 Indian army personnel on February 14, 2019.

In the aftermath of the Pulwama attack, three permanent members of the UNSC - the United States, the United Kingdom and France supported India's stand and passed a resolution to ban Azhar by designating him as a global terrorist in the Council. The UNSC makes a decision on any resolution within 40 days of submission by permanent members, unless blocked by another permanent member. So far, eyes were on Beijing - the all-time ally of Pakistan - who had used its veto powers to block the UNSC from moving any resolution against Azhar.

Amidst mounting international pressure, the State Department Deputy Spokesperson Robert Palladino made an official statement that, "Azhar is the founder and the leader of the JeM, and he meets the criteria for designation by the United Nations" and not doing so will be against regional stability and peace. For India, one of the reasons for receiving such a broad spectrum of international support is the global resonance against terror threats, which stop governments from letting down the guard.

Albeit Pakistan is still not isolated on global stance, and it has much powerful allies - but history is evidence that India has been more successful in getting international support for its interests. Perhaps, that is because of India's image as a more credible and responsible nation than the rhetoric neighbour that allegedly lets terror outfits enjoy resurgence on its soils.