

## **Arundathi Roy Facing Threat of Sedition Charges:**

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### **The Context:**

Arundathi Roy is facing the threat of being charged for sedition by the Indian State. This is because she had visited Indian Occupied Kashmir, met and spoke with a diverse group of people who had shared their grief, bitterness and anger, and who had attested to the atrocities committed against them by the Indian occupation forces. Shaken by this direct experience, she had dared to expose the crimes of occupation and the untold suffering and abuse the people have had to endure for sixty three years. She had exposed the hideous torture to which detainees have been subjected to. She had cried out in agony for the oppressed Kashmir people, including detainees, Moslem women victims of rape, the Dalit soldiers and poor Indians- all of whom are paying the insufferable price of Occupation. On this basis, she had called for freedom, simply as the most civilized and humane solution to this volcanic political crisis and epic human suffering. She had simply stood for the right of self-determination of the Kashmir people, so they can be free of all external manipulations and control, and decide upon the form of independent state under which they shall live with equality, dignity, security and democratic freedom. She is only giving expression to accepted UN resolutions, and to the official declarations of the Indian State itself, which has publicly and on several occasions, reiterated its unwavering commitment to this very same right of self-determination. She is simply demanding that the Indian State lives up to its own stated principles and policies, since this is the way to bring peace, security and justice to the region. The Indian State would be walking into a veritable political storm, where its stark duplicity would be held up before the people of the world, if it would dare to indict Arundathi on sedition charges.

### **Alerting The Possibility Of Unprecedented Human Catastrophe:**

She is issuing an implicit warning that unless there is a democratic solution, based on respecting the right of self-determination of the Kashmiri people, the conflict would lead to even more unthinkable horrifying consequences. And she is right. If this conflict is not resolved democratically, and it leads to yet another war between India and Pakistan, it would be catastrophic for the whole South Asian sub-continent- and beyond. There will be colossal human dislocation, death and destruction. It will have lasting devastating effects on the environment. Next time around, a war between India and Pakistan will have global and regional players preying for strategic advantage and superiority. It would bring unprecedented anarchy and chaos, as each imperialist/ reactionary/ expansionist predator power moves to optimize its own political-economic-strategic advantage- at the expense of the other. Implicitly, she is alerting the world of the impending catastrophe, if freedom is not granted to the people of Kashmir- Now!

### **Further Duplicity and Deception Or Moving Forwards:**

Now, instead of taking up the critical and vital issue of independence and freedom of the Kashmiri nation- self-determination - simply reiterated by Arundathi Roy and echoing millions of others, and endorsed by the vast majority of countries in the world represented in the UN, the Indian establishment has decided to bring her down as a traitor. She is being accused for calling for the break up of the Indian Union, and indirectly for supporting separatism and terrorism. Instantaneously, almost all the print and electronic media in India have splashed the issue, in a mounting campaign of vilification. It is something to ponder how this particular mix of vocabulary and political culture built around conjoining separatism=terrorism=traitor is gaining legitimacy throughout the neo-colonial states of South Asia- and gaining currency internationally.

### **Arundathi: A Guardian and Symbol of Freedom:**

Arundathi Roy is loved and respected, even adored, all over world by all freedom-loving people. She has consistently and courageously stood with the oppressed against the oppressor. She has brought hope and inspiration to the struggles of the oppressed for liberation. What she has done is to speak the truth about the land and the people of Kashmir that countless millions of people in India and around the world have been saying for six decades. Arundathi Roy had also defended the struggle of the adivasi tribal people in that vast and wide expanse referred to as the 'red corridor' to retain their land, livelihood, culture and identity, when the Indian government is trying to liquidate their distinctive existence, in order to offer the land and resources of this vast area for exploitation and plunder by predator multi-national corporations. This revolutionary struggle is being led by Maoist forces, who have been declared to be the most serious threat to internal security by the Indian State, and who are facing sustained vicious military suppression and political repression. Yet, Arundathi Roy had unwaveringly defended the right of the oppressed tribal people to struggle for their land and for their liberation. This position won great and abiding respect, love and admiration for Arundathi Roy from a whole array of progressive, democratic, revolutionary- freedom loving - people of the world.

### **An Indomitable Specter Haunting Reaction.**

Arundathi Roy is a specter haunting the Indian Comprador ruling class, which is condemning the vast masses of India to utter poverty, misery and degradation, in order to open wide the gates of imperialist penetration, domination and exploitation, so they may share in the spoils of profit and plunder. The hyped-up economic growth rates and aspirations for big-power status are based on oceans of endless mass poverty, misery and degradation- whether India or China. Regimes that survive by crushing and bleeding the poor, amassing fortunes through naked corruption, enslaving minority nationalities and sit on top of highly hierarchical, hegemonic forms of domination and control cannot tolerate any serious exposure or dissent. Cries for justice based on objective, scientific facts- based on *truth*, simply have to be extinguished, lest they find resonance in the hearts of the people. This appears to be what Arundathi Roy is facing.

### **Hands Off Arundathi:**

When a composite profile of Arundathi Roy's ideological and political principles are taken into account, she functions as a vanguard fighter for the oppressed that has stood against all established, entrenched and ingrained prejudice, illusion and deception, against all forms domination and subordination carried out by which ever force, and at whatever cost. This is the doctrinal essence of the message that is contained in her cry for the freedom of the Kashmiri people. We salute her for her clarity of vision, indomitable will, and courage of conviction. She has become a clarion voice of the voiceless, a sparkling light of truth, a glowing tribune of the oppressed people, not only in India, but internationally. She truly is a child of the universe who belongs to all the toiling, suffering masses of the world. If the Indian establishment is to condemn, let alone prosecute Arundathi Roy for sedition, then they shall be engaged in trying to extinguish a burning flame of democracy and freedom that has lit the world- and the consequences are bound to reverberate throughout the world. Hands off Arundathi! will become a resounding, rallying cry for blazing the world with the message of FREEDOM!