**Objectives Resolution** is one of the most important documents in the constitutional history of Pakistan. It was passed by the first Constituent Assembly on 12th March 1949 under the leadership of Liaquat Ali Khan. The Objectives Resolution is one of the most important and illuminating documents in the constitutional history of Pakistan. It laid down the objectives on which the future constitution of the country was to be based and it proved to be the foundational stone of the constitutional development in Pakistan. The most significant thing was that it contained the basic principles of both Islamic political system and Western Democracy. Its importance can be ascertained from the fact that it served as preamble for the constitution of 1956, 1962 and 1973 and ultimately became the part of the Constitution when the Eighth Amendment in the Constitution of 1973 was passed in 1985.

Objective Resolution was presented in the Constituent Assembly by Liaquat Ali Khan on March 7, 1949 and was debated for five days by the members from both the treasury and opposition benches. The resolution was ultimately passed on March 12. Following were the main features of the Objectives Resolution:

1. Sovereignty of the entire Universe belongs to Allah alone
2. Authority should be delegated to the State trough its people under the rules set by Allah
3. Constitution of Pakistan should be framed by the Constituent Assembly
4. State should exercise its powers through the chosen representatives
5. Principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice, as inshore by Islam should be followed
6. Muslims shall live their lives according the teaching of Quran and Sunnah
7. Minorities can freely profess and practice their religion.
8. There should be Federal form of government with the maximum autonomy for the Units
9. Fundamental rights including equality of status, of opportunity and before law, social, economic and political justice, and freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship and association, subject to law and public morality should be given to all the citizens of the state.
10. It would be the duty of the state to safeguard the interests of minorities, backward and depressed classes.
11. Independence of judiciary should be guaranteed
12. Integrity of the territory and sovereignty of the country was to be safeguarded
13. The people of Pakistan may prosper and attain their rightful and honored place amongst the nations of the world and make their full contribution towards international peace and progress and happiness of humanity.

Liaquat Ali Khan explained the context of the resolution in his speech delivered in the Constituent Assembly on March 7, 1949. He termed the passage of the Objectives Resolution as “the most important occasion in the life of this country, next in importance only to the achievement of independence.’. He said that we as Muslim believed that authority vested in Allah Almighty and it should be exercised in accordance with the standards laid down in Islam. He added that this preamble had made it clear that the authority would be exercised by the chosen persons; which is the essence of democracy and it eliminates the dangers of theocracy. It emphasized on the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance, and social justice and it says that these should be part of future constitution.

But when it was debated in the session of the Constituent Assembly, it was opposed and criticized by minorities’ leaders. A non Muslim, Prem Hari proposed that the motion should be first circulated for evoking public opinion and should then be discussed in the house on April 30, 1949. He was supported by Sris Chandra Chattopadhyaya, who proposed some amendments in the resolution. To him, since the committee of Fundamental Rights had finalized their report, there was no need for this resolution to recommend these rights. He added that the Objectives Resolution was amalgamation of religion and politics; hence it would create ambiguities with relation to its application in constitutional framework. He wanted time to study and understand the Objectives Resolution.

While discussing rights of religious minorities, Chandra Mandal opposed the resolution by saying that ‘why ulemas are insisting on this principle of Islam whereas India has Pandits but they did not demand things like that. Individual do have religion but state had not. So we think it a great deviation in our beloved Pakistan.’ Kumar Datta opposed it by saying that ‘if this resolution came in life of Jinnah it would not have come in its present form. Let us not do anything which lead our generation to blind destiny.’ Other Hindu members also proposed some amendments in the resolution and recommended that some words like ‘…sacred trust”, “…within the limits prescribed by Him”, and “… as enunciated by Islam” should be omitted. Some new words should be inserted like “as prescribed by Islam and other religions”, and “National sovereignty belongs to the people of Pakistan”, etc.

Mian Muhammad Iftikharuddin was the only Muslim member in the house who opposed the resolution. To him the resolution was vague and many words used in it do not mean anything. He further suggested that such a resolution should not only be the product of Muslim League members sitting in the assembly alone. Rather it was supposed to be the voice of seventy million people of Pakistan.

On the other hand Objectives Resolution was strongly supported by Dr. Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi, Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, Sardar Abdurrab Nishter, Noor Ahmad, Begam Shaista, Muhammad Hussain and others. In order to counter the allegations they argued that Islam governs not only our relations with God but also the activities of the believers in other spheres of life as Islam is complete code of life.

After a great debate finally the resolution was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on March 12, 1949. Liaquat Ali Khan assured the minorities that they will get all the fundamental rights in Pakistan once the constitution based on the Objectives Resolution will be enforced. However, this resolution created a division on the communal lines as the Muslim members except for Mian Iftikharuddin voted in favor of it and the non Muslim opposed it. It created a suspicion in the mind of minorities against majority. Since, the Resolution has yet not been implemented in Pakistan in the true spirit, the doubts in the minds of the minorities still exists.