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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Stichting Basug (Bangladesh Support Group), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[19 May 2022]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only. The views expressed in the present document do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations or its officials.



The 1971 Genocide in Bangladesh

On the 50th Anniversary of the Liberation War and the birth of Bangladesh, the Bangladeshi diaspora organisation, Stichting BASUG (Bangladesh Support Group) with Special Consultative Status of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations has issued the following statement reiterating the demand for 'international recognition of the 1971 Genocide' committed against the Bengali nation during the war of independence.

We should recall that the 1971 Genocide in Bangladesh, that was perpetrated by the Pakistan military, is one of the worst mass atrocities witnessed after the Second World War. In nine months, the occupation army killed approximately 3 million people, violated over two hundred thousand women, and forced 10 million people to cross the border and take shelter in India.

History of Bangladesh is intrinsically tied to the Liberation War of 1971, which was a story of perilous violence and bloodshed. The nascent state of Bangladesh emerged from the remnants of the carnage that was carried out by the West Pakistani armed forces. It has been a long struggle. The population in East Pakistan had little choice but to demand secession and rose against the systematic subjugation by its western counterpart.

The 1971 Genocide by the Pakistan Army is well documented and reported in the international media. Diplomatic correspondences and parliamentary reports during that period acknowledged what had taken place. The world media, including The Telegraph, The Times, The Sunday Times, The New York Times and several news agencies reported the massacre of the Bengalis by the Pakistan Army. Some stories reached their front pages. The story of the massacre of the fateful night of 25 March 1971 was highlighted across the world.

The Guinness Book of Records lists the Bangladesh Genocide as one of the top 5 genocides in the 20th century. It was one of the worst genocides of the World War II era, outstripping Rwanda (800,000 killed) and probably surpassing even Indonesia (1 million to 1.5 million killed in 1965-66).

The Pakistan Army used organized systematic rape as a weapon of war. Young girls and women were abducted and repeatedly gang-raped in special camps run by the Pakistani servicemen. The Pakistani Army under a blueprint from high command, systematically killed intellectuals and professionals of Bangladesh, a spiteful and evil act which stand with and apart from the mass indiscriminate killings of civilians.

We demand a UN Resolution: Without further delay, there is an urgent need for an UN-sponsored resolution condemning atrocities that took place in 1971. The perpetrators must be brought to justice because new generations must know what took place in Bangladesh. We cannot forget and must learn from this evil.

Unfortunately, the Bangladesh Genocide is becoming a forgotten chapter in contemporary history. We know the common phrase, 'justice delayed, justice denied' accompanies and mocks the global humanitarian mantra of, 'never again'. The genocide of 1971 was never meant to happen after the Holocaust. The global system that was based on a renewed commitment to human rights failed to protect Bangladesh and has failed to bring justice to the victims.

Due to lack of international recognition, the history of that horror, genocide has become faded in the world today. The lack of accountability undermines human rights for all and is painful, especially for the Bengalis. Not only are they denied justice, but a central component of their history is being erased and ignored, making closure and more peaceful futures seem further out of reach.

Therefore, we strongly demand that the 1971 Genocide should be recognised to give justice to the victims of the atrocities and bring the perpetrators to justice. We also call upon the United Nations General Assembly and other international entities to formally recognize the Bangladesh genocide of 1971 – one of the darkest, yet most overlooked chapters in the human history. We believe that only through confronting the past with sincerity and truth we can acknowledge our shared humanity and truly flourish.