



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

### Fifty-first session

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Agenda item 3

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

### **Written statement\* submitted by Platform for Youth Integration and Volunteerism, 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.

[13 August 2022]

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\* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



## **Indian excesses regarding usurping Bangladesh's share of common rivers water, a cause for deprivation and human crises (Teesta water treaty and Farraka barrage)**

The UNGA (United Nations General Assembly) has codified the rule of equitable utilization in Article 5 of its United Nations Convention on the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (UN Convention of May 21, 1997). Article 5 requires watercourse nations to utilize an international watercourse in an equitable and reasonable manner and shall participate in use, development, and protection of an international watercourse. The UN Convention also embraced a second principle, termed the "No Harm Rule" in Article 7; requiring the watercourse nations to prevent the causing of significant harm to other watercourse nations and discusses the option of, where appropriate, to discuss the question of compensation. India has been depriving Bangladesh since 1970 of its equitable share of common rivers being a lower riparian nation. However, the issue here is not about the law or pure economic or socio in nature but a humanitarian and fight of people for their survival. Our organization wants your attention to the critical issue of human crises emerging from the latest situation arose from inequitable and harmful use of shared rivers between India and Bangladesh by India.

India entirely controls the Ganges water flow at Farakka Barrage located near Monohorpur thus minimizing the water for Bangladesh. Bangladesh already lost 15600 km inland transportation route, and the 3300 km route is at risk. The Ganges River water has entirely changed because of Farakka Barrage which is, directly or indirectly, affecting the rivers and fisheries in Bangladesh. At the time of 1999-2000, Bangladesh could produce 23.07 million tons of rice, but after the Farakka Barrage, which is half now. About 34% of crops are extinct because of the scarcity of water. Rice production will come to an end in Bangladesh, if this continues like this. After finding the Environmental Impact Assessment result, we can say 8% of the farmer, 24% of the boatman, 65% of the fisherman changed their livelihood because of the Farakka Barrage impact. Farakka Barrage is not only affecting the livelihood but also biodiversity of Bangladesh. Due to the insufficient flow of water, Bangladeshis are being forced to displace thereby creating a humanitarian crisis. Moreover, the floral composition is decreasing in this region. Also, some aquatic animals are on the verge of extinction. The Ganges River Dolphin and the Ganges Soft shell Turtle are listed endangered species.

Human rights defenders are deeply concerned relating to the humanitarian impact of the Farakka Barrage, which is a complete violation of the "No harm principle" and inequitable use of Teesta water as no nation can harm other countries through their development activities.

We look forward to a positive response from the OHCHR to take appropriate action to safeguard the rights to living of these threatened and deprived people who shall soon be engulfed with existential and severe crises and compensate for their losses through adequate measures on humanitarian grounds.

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