

**International Online Conference to mark the
International Genocide Remembrance Day organized by
'Forum for Secular Bangladesh' (Nirmul Committee)**

Demands for International recognition of Bangladesh genocide and resisting ongoing genocide across the world

December 09, 2021, 'Forum for Secular Bangladesh and Trial of War Criminals of 1971' (Nirmul Committee) observed the International Day of Genocide declared by the United Nations with due dignity. On this occasion, an online international conference was organized by the forum where 19 genocide victims from 14 countries, genocide researchers, legislators, human rights and peace activists participated. Topic of the conference was: **'International recognition of Bangladesh genocide, condemnation of ongoing genocides across the world and repatriation of Rohingya refugees'**.

Honorable Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud MP (Govt. of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh) was the chief guest at the conference, which was presided over by writer and journalist Shahriar Kabir, President of 'Forum for

Secular Bangladesh'. The conference was attended by Human rights defender, Portuguese politician Paulo Casaca (Former MEP, Founder & Executive Director of South Asia Democratic Forum, Belgium), Professor Dr. Gregory H. Stanton (Founding Chairman & President,

Genocide Watch USA), Human rights defender Julian Francis ('Friends of Liberation War Honour' recipient, Member, Citizens' Commission for Investigating Rohingya Genocide in Myanmar, UK), Classical Dance Artiste Sheema Kermani (Women's rights & Peace activist, President, "Tehrik-e-Niswan", Pakistan), Human rights defender Mona Haghgou Strindberg (Attorney at Law, United Nations Association, Sweden), Human rights defender Dr. Lakhumal Luhana (General Secretary, World Sindhi Congress, based in UK), Human rights defender Natalia Sineaeva- Pankowska (Member, NEVER AGAIN, Poland), Filmmaker writer Ferhat Atik (President, 21st Century Forum for Humanity, Turkey), human rights defender Fazal-ur-Rehman Afridi (Pashtun leader representing the UN Human Rights Council from France), Journalist Sabo Kosimova (Uyghur rights activist,

Uzbekistan), Afghan human rights defender Sabur Shah Dawodzai (CEO, Bin Dawod Foundation, Deputy Executive Director, One Young World), Attorney Kobra Moradi (Afghan Australian human rights activist), Human rights defender Banfsheh Pour'Zand (Iranian-American Journalist) and



Slain Bengalis in front of Jessore City College, a sign of Pakistani atrocity. Jessore, Bangladesh. December, 1971
Courtesy: S M Shafi



On December 09, 2021, 'Forum for Secular Bangladesh' (Nirmul Committee) organized an international online conference observing the International Genocide Remembrance Day entitled 'International recognition of Bangladesh genocide, condemnation of ongoing genocides across the world and repatriation of Rohingya refugees'. (First row from left) chief guest Honorable Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud MP (Govt. of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh), President of the Forum writer and journalist Shahriar Kabir; Human rights defender, Portuguese politician Paulo Casaca (Former MEP, Founder & Executive Director of South Asia Democratic Forum, Belgium), Professor Dr. Gregory H. Stanton (Founding Chairman & President, Genocide Watch USA), Human rights defender Julian Francis ('Friends of Liberation War Honour' recipient, Member, Citizens' Commission for Investigating Rohingya Genocide in Myanmar, UK) and Classical Dance Artiste Sheema Kermani (Women's rights & Peace activist, President, "Tehrik-e-Niswan", Pakistan) are presenting their speech at the international conference

Security and political analyst Priyajit Debsarkar (Indian author based in UK). Welcome speech was presented by Human rights defender Tarun Kanti Chowdhury (President, All European Forum for Secular Bangladesh) while thanks note was given by Human rights defender Anar Chowdhury (General Secretary, All European Forum for Secular Bangladesh, Belgium). The Moderator of the conference was Human rights defender Asif Munier Tonmoy (Son of Professor Munier Chowdhury, Killed in 1971)

Speaking at the start of the conference, **President of 'Forum for Secular Bangladesh and Trial of War Criminbals of 1971' writer journalist Shahriar Kabir** said, 'The conference was to be held in front of the European Parliament in Brussels today. After all preparations have been made, the conference is being held online as public gatherings have been banned due to the sudden outbreak of the Corona epidemic.' The European Parliament is urged to play

an effective role in the speedy repatriation of Rohingyas who have taken refuge in Bangladesh, victims of genocide in Myanmar. At the conference, civil society leaders from 14 countries agreed to accept the memorandum.

Speakers' remarks

In his introductory speech, **President of 'Forum for Secular Bangladesh and Trial of War Criminbals of 1971' writer journalist Shahriar Kabir** said, 'Forum for Secular Bangladesh has been agitating for international recognition of the genocide in Bangladesh for a long time. Today's conference on the occasion of International Genocide Day has been organized in its continuation. We hope that the European Parliament and the international community will take stronger and more effective steps to secure world peace and protect the equal rights and dignity of all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, language or gender.'

In his speech as the chief guest of the conference **Honorable Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud MP (Govt. of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh)**, said, 'During the 9-month genocide in 1971, the Pakistani military along with its ally Jamaat-e-Islami and other communal groups carried out a horrific genocide in Bangladesh. I believe this genocide must be recognized internationally. Even in this era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, genocide is taking place somewhere in the world and the number of refugees in the world is at an all time high. As a result of the genocide in Myanmar, 1.1 million Rohingya refugees have taken refuge in Bangladesh, and this number continues to rise due to the birth of newborns, which is a threat to the security and biodiversity of densely populated Bangladesh. But the international community is not responsible for

the Rohingya refugees in Myanmar. The international community should take responsible steps to facilitate the repatriation of Rohingya to Myanmar. Various countries are constantly asking Bangladesh to give shelter to the Rohingyas of Myanmar, but they themselves are not taking any action in this regard. Conflicts are arising in various countries over issues such as the arms trade, resulting in genocide and an increase in the number of refugees. Which is by no means desirable. I expect the support of the international community for the international recognition of the genocide in Bangladesh.'

Describing Pakistan as a terrorist state, **Portuguese politician Human rights defender Paulo Casaca (Former MEP, Founder & Executive Director of South Asia Democratic Forum, Belgium)**, said: 'In the last 50 years of Bangladesh, 3 million Bengalis



July 07, 2021, human chain in front of the European Headquarters of the United Nations in Geneva, in collaboration with the 'Forum for Secular Bangladesh' (Nirmul Committee), the All European chapter of the Forum and the Switzerland chapter of the Forum demanding international recognition of the Bangladesh genocide of 1971 and the repatriation of the Rohingya refugees to Myanmar who took refuge in Bangladesh

File photo



On December 09, 2021, 'Forum for Secular Bangladesh' (Nirmul Committee) organized an international online conference observing the International Genocide Remembrance Day entitled 'International recognition of Bangladesh genocide, condemnation of ongoing genocides across the world and repatriation of Rohingya refugees'. (First row from left) Human rights defender Mona Haghgou Strindberg (Attorney at Law, United Nations Association, Sweden), Human rights defender Dr. Lakhumal Luhana (General Secretary, World Sindhi Congress, based in UK), Human rights defender Natalia Sineaeva-Pankowska (Member, NEVER AGAIN, Poland), Filmmaker writer Ferhat Atik (President, 21st Century Forum for Humanity, Turkey), human rights defender Fazal-ur-Rehman Afridi (Pashtun leader representing the UN Human Rights Council from France) and Journalist Sabo Kosimova (Uyghur rights activist, Uzbekistan) are presenting their speech at the international conference

were brutally killed by the Pakistani military. The world has not witnessed such a horrific genocide in the recent past. But Pakistan has not faced any kind of trial even today. Due to which the country is still committing genocide in Sindh and Baloch provinces. They are now the only terrorist producing and exporting state in the world. Pakistan should also be punished for disturbing world peace.'

The United Nations has failed to achieve its main goal, said **Professor Dr. Gregory H. Stanton (Founding Chairman & President, Genocide Watch USA)**, 'Fifty million people have died in the civil war since 1945', Mr. Stanton said, 'One crore people have died in the genocide. These genocides are mainly carried out by the government of the country. The United Nations has practically failed to prevent that.' Professor Gregory mentions ten issues as one of the reasons for the failure of the United Nations, 1. The veto power of five countries has paralyzed the Security Council, 2. Forget the unity for peace to empower the General Assembly, 3. The United

Nations is an organization of nations, not "the people", 4. Nation-states consider minorities to be within their internal jurisdiction, 5. National policy is determined by economic and political interests, 6. The International Court of Justice has distorted the Convention on Genocide, 7. There is no permanent army in the UN because Article 43-48 has not been implemented, 8. Perm-5 leaders defend genocidal states and lack the political will to prevent or stop genocide, 9. Even the UN Special Adviser on Genocide Prevention thinks that the term genocide can only be applied after a court ruling and 10. The court handed down the verdicts of genocide too late.'

Human rights defender Julian Francis ('Friends of Liberation War Honour' recipient, Member, Citizens' Commission for Investigating Rohingya Genocide in Myanmar, UK), said, 'I have seen how frightened thousands of men and women have taken refuge in refugee camps in India for safe haven. Women, men, children, old people were all stunned by the atrocities. Because their loved ones were

killed in front of them.'

Condemning the Rohingya genocide and calling on the United Nations to be more active in the repatriation of refugees, Julian Francis added, 'The international community has ignored the Rohingya issue for decades and now some countries are blocking the talks. The Myanmar government has not implemented any of the reports submitted by the Kofi Annan Commission on the repatriation of Rohingya. Rohingya refugees are reluctant to return to Myanmar as the Myanmar government has not been able to create a safe haven for Rohingya repatriation. So the world community must take immediate action to repatriate the Rohingya.'

'We apologize on behalf of the women of Pakistan for the 1971 genocide,' said **Classical Dance Artiste Sheema Kermani (Women's rights & Peace activist, President, "Tehrik-e-Niswan", Pakistan)**, 'Pakistan should stately apologize to Bangladesh for genocide, violence against women and war crimes. The report of the Hamudur Rahman Commission has identified and tried the Pakistani warlords who committed genocide in Bangladesh. Due to the religious imperialist policy of Pakistan, the war of liberation of Bangladesh took place in 1971 and so many Bengalis were killed in the genocide. The policy of Pakistan which we are witnessing is still continuing through the deprivation of rights of the non-Muslim population of Pakistan in various cases, oppression and torture on different communities. Pakistan's textbooks contain hate speech against people of different religions, which we condemn.'

Demanding that Pakistan be brought to justice for the genocide in Bangladesh, **Human rights defender Mona Haghgou Strindberg (Attorney at Law, United Nations Association, Sweden)**, said, 'Because the international community has not yet recognized this genocide. We should raise our voice for global recognition of such barbaric genocide in Bangladesh. If the murderers are not brought to justice, they will have the courage to commit genocide again.'

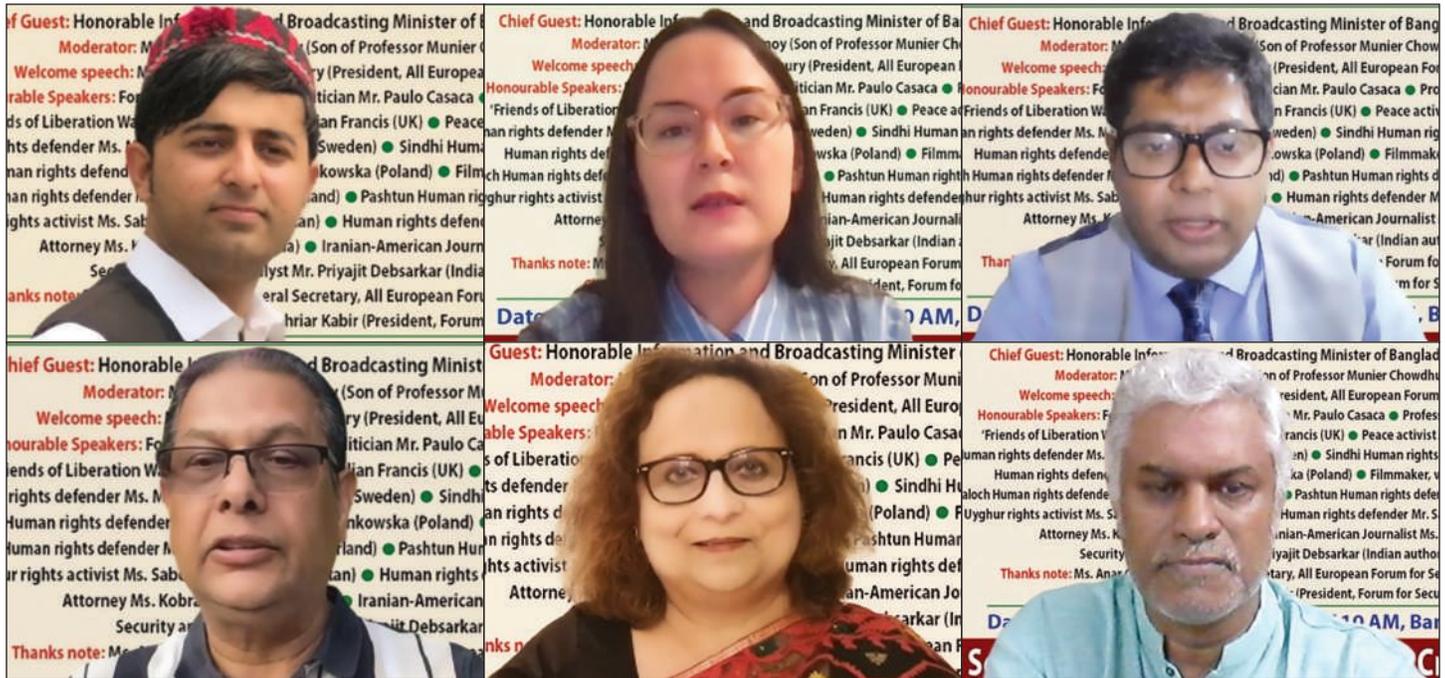
Human rights defender Dr. Lakhumal Luhana (General Secretary, World Sindhi Congress, based in UK), said, 'The Pakistani army carried out the

most horrific massacre in human history in Bangladesh, torturing and killing three million civilians and raping three million women. This is one of the biggest genocides in human history. But the genocidal Pakistani army did not get any punishment for this heinous crime. As a result, they themselves have committed genocide against the people of Sindh and Balochistan provinces of Pakistan. The Sindhi people are now facing a systematic, ruthless and far-reaching genocide perpetrated by the state agencies of Pakistan.'

While highlighting the details of the genocide in Bangladesh, he drew the attention of the world community to stop the ongoing genocide in Sindh and Balochistan. He further said, 'Therefore, I call on the United Nations and the world community to recognize all genocides in the world, including Bangladesh, and bring the perpetrators of genocide to justice immediately.'

Human rights defender Natalia Sineaeva-Pankowska (Member, NEVER AGAIN, Poland), said, 'I am researching the Holocaust and a member of Poland-based Never Again. Recognition of genocide raises public awareness among the people. I think the recognition of all the genocides in the world, including the genocide in Bangladesh, is very important because the genocide needs to be recognized if the genocide is to be tried and if the barbaric genocide is not brought to justice then the world will see the repetition of genocide again and again.'

Condemning the genocide, **Filmmaker writer Ferhat Atik (President, 21st Century Forum for Humanity, Turkey)**, said, 'Since prehistoric times, people have committed genocide because of their primitiveness and ignorance. People have committed murders among themselves on various pretexts. Such barbaric killings are unacceptable in this modern age. We hope for an end to such ignorance and primitiveness. And the genocide of some genocide has become an addiction, which is by no means desirable. In 1971, Bangladesh witnessed genocide. Now is the time for all to unite and protest against the genocide. The time has come to give global recognition to the genocide that took place in Bangladesh. I hope we will be able to achieve this



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recognition with all our efforts.'

Human rights defender Fazal-ur-Rehman Afridi (Pashtun leader representing the UN Human Rights Council from France), gave an overview of the Pakistani military's use of force and torture against Pakistan's Pashtun population. He said, 'Pakistan's policy of terrorism, like the 1971 genocide in Bangladesh, is still going on.'

'My community also wants the genocide to be recognized and justice to be done', said **Journalist Sabo Kosimova (Uyghur rights activist, Uzbekistan)**. 'But unfortunately, China is a country that commits human rights violations, commits genocide while it is a country with a veto power of the United Nations. Powerful states are not punished or prosecuted for organizing human rights violations and genocide. Which is very unfortunate for us. As a genocidal nation, we Uyghurs understand the deep suffering of the Bangladeshi people. We are and will remain by the side of those who are victims and victims

of genocide. The superpower, China and Pakistan, violated the 1948 agreement on the prevention of genocide and the punishment of those responsible.'

Expressing her condolences to the victims of the genocide, **Attorney Kobra Moradi (Afghan Australian human rights activist)**, said, 'Today is the day of the genocide. I am a member of the Hazara ethnic minority group in Afghanistan. Hazaras, like the Bengalis, have a long history of persecution, which has not been properly documented.'

Highlighting the connection between the oppression and genocide of the Hazra community and the Bengali people, Muradi said, 'Throughout the history of Afghanistan, we have been oppressed and persecuted. I have been the victim of discrimination, torture and genocide by almost every Afghan government. Like the genocide of the Bengalis in 1971, the genocide against the Hazaras also escaped the notice of the world community and those who did not get global recognition even today.'

Highlighting the tragic history and statistics of the

Hazara genocide and the ongoing genocide in Afghanistan, she said, 'On International Genocide Remembrance and Prevention Day, I call on the United Nations to launch an independent inquiry into the collection and preservation of evidence of ongoing torture in Afghanistan. The international community must take immediate action to ensure the human rights and protection of ordinary Afghans in Afghanistan.'

Human rights defender Banfsheh Pour'Zand (Iranian-American Journalist), described the current Iranian government's crackdown on free-thinking people, intellectuals, women's rights, freedom of speech, culture and religion.

Afghan human rights defender Sabur Shah Dawodzai (CEO, Bin Dawod Foundation, Deputy Executive Director, One Young World), described the horrific situation of Afghans and said, 'Fortunately, the stories of those Afghans who survived with the help of Poland, America, Canada, Germany, England, France and other countries of the world are also heartbreaking. The story of Afghanistan is not new to many. But witnessing every event is new for everyone here. The Taliban, a terrorist group that has been intimidating and killing scores of Afghans every day since 2004.' 'They have no sympathy for any tribe living in

Afghanistan', He said, 'the Taliban have killed more than 80 percent of the Pashtun population, which could be tragic for many.'

Addressing human rights leaders and the international community at the conference, he called on the people of Afghanistan to do something for the people who are still victims of the genocide in Afghanistan. 'Please open your doors to those who are still victims of the genocide in Afghanistan', he added.

Elaborating on the horrific details of the 1971 genocide, **security and political analyst Priyajit Debsarkar (Indian author based in UK)**, said, 'The main objective of their barbarism was to eradicate the Bengali nation completely.'

Demanding the trial of the perpetrators of genocide and global recognition of the genocide of 1971, he said, 'Those who were victims of genocide in 1971 are still waiting for justice. If the murderers are not brought to justice, the souls of the martyrs will not get peace.'

Welcoming the distinguished guests of the online international conference, **Human rights defender Tarun Kanti Chowdhury (President, All European Forum for Secular Bangladesh)**, said, 'It is not possible to give justice to the victims of genocide without recognition.'

MEMORANDUM

To the Honourable President of the European Parliament

For recognising the Bangladesh Genocide of 1971, Condemning ongoing genocides across the world, including the Rohingya genocide and the safe return of Rohingya refugees to their homeland in Myanmar

December 09, 2021

WHEREAS between March 25 and December 16, 1971, the Pakistani occupation army and its local collaborators conducted a systematic genocidal attack against the Bengali nation and Hindu religious groups. It caused the annihilation of 3 million people in Bangladesh and the rape of over two hundred thousand women. Ten million helpless people were forcibly driven out of their homeland to neighbouring India where they took refuge for months.

WHEREAS the Bangladeshi genocide was widely reported at the time of its occurrence, but was quickly forgotten by the world— so much so that no effort has so far been made by the international community to bring the perpetrators to justice;