

# Andy Vermaut: "We demand that the 25th of March, 1971, be designated as International Bangladesh Genocide Day."

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Genocide under international law is defined as mass slaughters, crimes, and the murdering of a community for its political, cultural, religious, and ethnic identity.”

*Shahidul Haque*

25, 2022, from 11 am to 12 pm (Brussels time) at Place Robert Schuman in front of the European summit in Brussels, a commemoration ceremony will take place around the genocide in Bangladesh that started on March 25, 1971 this was last year organized by Andy Vermaut from the international alliance for the defense of rights and freedoms (AIDL) and PostVersa non profit organization, but this year together with 5 organisations. Afterwards, an academic session will take place at Mundo Madou, located at Kunstlaan 7/8, 1210 Brussels starting at 13h30 and ending at 17h30. This event is co-organized by

the Bangladesh community in Brussels, the Awami League, the International Alliance for the Defense of Rights and Freedoms (AIDL) consulted by the UN, Global Solidarity for Peace and the non-profit organization Postversa and the European Association for the defense of minorities (EADM).

3 million people killed

Andy Vermaut: "Yes. Indeed. Today is the National Genocide Day in Bangladesh. One of the terrible and horrible crimes committed by Pakistani rulers was the genocide in Bangladesh on March 25, 1971, which was spearheaded by the Pakistani army with the commencement of Operation Searchlight as a military action to defeat Bangladesh's independence. During the 9-month-long Bangladesh independence struggle, the Pakistani military and local collaborators Jamat Islamic (fundamentalist Islamic organization) slaughtered 3 million Bengalis and raped between 200,000 and 400,000 women. Another 8 to 10 million people, predominantly Hindus, left the nation in search of safety in India. According to Bangladesh and Indian reports, up to 30 million citizens were internally displaced. Deportation, ethnic cleansing, mass murder, and genocidal rape were all the types of attacks."

## Forgotten genocide

Shahidul Haque explains: "This genocide is largely unknown to the world population, owing to the lack of digital media in 1971, limitations on foreign journalists, and Bangladesh's subsequent reluctance to effectively highlight genocide in UN and European forums. This is partly due to the geopolitics of the time, which was controlled by the Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, and India. " The death was described as "one of the deadliest slaughters in recent times, and Washington's silence on the indiscriminate mass murder" by the New York Times. The Sunday Times ran items under the banner "Genocide." Anchor Blood, the US Consul General in Dhaka, described the situation as genocide in a telegram to the White House. Prof. Garry Bass's recently released book, "Blood Telegraph, Nixon, Kissinger, and a Forgotten Genocide," discusses the Bangladesh Genocide. As a terrible incident in human history, then-UN Secretary General U Thant wrote to the President of the UN Security Council. On March 24, 2019, the United Nations Secretary-Adviser General's on the Prevention of Genocide pledged to Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, "Though some nations may object, we would raise the topic of Pakistani Genocide in Bangladesh during the liberation struggle in International Forum." In 1971, several missionaries and international journalists discussed genocide.

## People were slaughtered

Jahangir Chowdhury: "In 2017, the Bangladesh Parliament overwhelmingly passed a resolution designating this day as National Genocide Day. On December 9, 1948, the United Nations overwhelmingly established a convention on genocide, defining it as a crime committed with the goal to eliminate in whole or in part a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group. But the Bangladesh Genocide has yet to enter in the list of UN recognized planned slaughters. Since the phrase "Genocide" was first used in international law over six decades ago, the UN has immediately recognized "mass slaughters" as a crime against humanity. Among these are the Holocaust's atrocities against Jews, the Armenian genocide, the Cambodian genocide, the Rwandan genocide, and the Bosnian genocide. When Pakistani ruler Ayub Khan refused to recognize the general election results of 1970, in which the Bangladesh Awami League, the main political party of East Pakistan, won an absolute majority in provincial and national elections, and when the President of Bangladesh Awami League and father of the nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, had earlier called for Bangladesh's independence, Yahya Khan, Pakistan's chief of army staff, began the massive killing on March 25, 1971 in Dhaka, Bangabandhu (Friend of Bengal) Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the father of the country, was captured by Pakistani soldiers early on March 26, 1971. Their initial aim was the residences of Dhaka University professors, student dormitories, the Dhaka police headquarters, slums, marketplaces, and Hindu-populated regions. On that night, over 60,000 people were slaughtered in Dhaka. For the following nine months, the Pakistani occupation troops used identical extermination techniques until the country was liberated from Pakistan on December 16, 1971, thanks to the disgraceful capitulation of 75,000 Pakistani armies. The massacre was conducted in the name of Islam, with the active cooperation and planning of the Jamat E Islamic in Bangladesh, which opposed Bangladesh's independence. The slaughter would not have occurred if local collaborators had refused to assist Pakistani soldiers," says Jahangir Chowdhury.

Genocide has to come on UN list

Shahidul Haque:"Following Bangladesh's independence, Pakistani lawyers and human rights advocates labeled the Pakistani army's acts in 1971 as genocide. Many testimonies of Pakistani army brutalities were published in foreign journals, shocking people all over the globe. A few years ago, the government of Bangladesh, led by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the daughter of the nation's founder, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, prosecuted the principal Bangladeshi accomplices of genocide perpetrated by Pakistanis by establishing the International Crime Tribunal. However, the major Pakistani generals and army personnel continue to enjoy impunity, and no action has been done by the Bangladesh government to bring them to justice. The 1971 genocide in Bangladesh, which was more severe than genocides in other regions of the globe throughout the twentieth century. Genocide under international law is defined as mass slaughters, crimes, and the murdering of a community for its political, cultural, religious, and ethnic identity in Bangladesh. Despite the fact that previous genocides are on the UN list, the genocide in Bangladesh is not. International Genocide Day should be observed on March 25th. The EU Parliament may pass a resolution designating the genocide in Bangladesh as a European day. We are urging EU countries and other nations to pass resolutions in national legislatures to acknowledge the killings in Bangladesh as genocide, despite the fact that they backed the cause of the liberation struggle in 1971. Bringing Pakistani Generals, Pakistani rulers, Pakistani army soldiers, and local collaborators to justice in accordance with international law. The Pakistani government must provide sufficient compensation to the families of those who died in genocide, as well as compensate the Bangladesh government for the damage and appropriation of national property. The United Nations and the European Union should formally register the crimes committed by a barbaric Pakistani administration against the people of Bangladesh. It will advance mankind, but crime must be acknowledged as such. States will learn not to perpetrate genocide. If such recognition occurs, Bangladesh may file official accusations in international tribunals against Pakistani authorities and troops for war crimes."

As one people united

Andy Vermaut:"We, from different organizations are as one people united, shall provide all necessary information and cooperation in order to get this Bangladesh Genocide Day recognized as an International and European day. This idea is already supported by the following groups, organizations, and individuals: the Bangladesh Community in Belgium & the Awami League of Belgium, PostVersa and the International Alliance for the defence of rights and Freedoms, Meena Qasimi - Human Rights Activist, Lailuma Sadid - Journalist Brussels Morning, Shahidul Haque - President ABCB, Jahangir Chowdhury - ALB, Murshed Mahmud president of Global Solidarity for Peace (GSP), Khokon Sharif, General Secretary GSP, Chowdhury Abul Kalam Azad - Joint Secretary A.L, Member GSP, Fowz Siddiq - member GSP and myself as a Human rights action defender and fundamental rights defender Andy Vermaut PostVersa/AIDL (Ecosoc), Hiwa Khoshnaw & Haval Faris - Secretary Postversa, Paulo Casaca Former member of European Parliament & Manel Msalmi from the European Association for the defense of rights and freedoms (EADM) and Gary Cartwright from EUtoday, Bidhan Deb - Vice President Be.A.L. Motaher Hossain Chowdhury - Counselor (PS), 1050 Ixelles, Daud Khan Sohel - Joint Secretary Be.A.L, Akhtaruzzaman Akhter - PR Be.A.L."

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