



HSC Chair Report

Addressing the Humanitarian Crisis Resulting from the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971.

Chair: Mai Le

Deputy Chair: David Muresan

Personal Statements

Chair – Mai Le

Dear Delegates, My name is Mai and I'm 17 years old. I live in Arnhem, The Netherlands and I have always loved MUN's. MUNISS will be my 10th conference, 2nd one to chair and I'm super excited to be chairing the Historical Security Council along with my co-chair Dave! For me, MUN's have always been great to meet new people and make new friends, as well as the interesting debating throughout the conference. HSC is a great committee to put your debating skills into practice and considering some countries also have Veto, it definitely is a perfect committee to picture yourself in the actual United Nations. Anyhow, I can't wait to meet everyone and listen to all the amazing debating!



Deputy Chair – David Muresan

Hello Delegates, my name is Dave and I am 17 years old. I was born in Târgu Mureș, Romania, but am now living in Hamburg, Germany. This year's MUNISS will be my first time chairing at a conference, and my fourth official conference overall. I am very excited to be your chair in the Historical Security Council. I find this committee especially great because it gives all of us a chance to better understand how past events were handled, and to come up with a solution based on our generation's modern thinking. I'm looking forward to hear what everyone comes up with, and what fruitful debate comes from it!



Introduction

The Indo-Pakistani war of 1971 is known to be a conflict which has led to a disastrous humanitarian crisis. In 1947 India partitioned, creating West and East Pakistan. Both territories shared a dominance in their religion of Islam, however, they were quite the opposite in terms of language, ethnicity and culture. When in 1970 parliamentary elections were held, an overwhelming number of East Pakistanis voted for a political party that strived to advocate autonomy in the East. Though they were blocked from governing by the army and the existing Pakistani government, its leader was sentenced to jail.

The war began when Pakistan launched 'Operation Chengiz Khan', consisting of aerial strikes on approximately eight Indian air stations. This incident led to India declaring war on Pakistan, highlighting their entry into the war where East Pakistan was striving for its independence. With India entering the war, it expanded the existing conflict with Indian and Pakistani forces engaging on both eastern and western fronts.

Mass demurrers passed in the East, but this was severely suppressed by the Pakistani army, causing a massive quantum of deportees to move into neighboring India. East Pakistani guerilla forces, supported by India fought with the Pakistani army, leading to West Pakistan to respond with air attacks on India. The open war came to a start on the 3rd of December. ¹ The conflict was won by India and East Pakistan in the end, resulting in East Pakistan turning into a newly independent state, Bangladesh. ²

¹ <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1969-1976/south-asia>

² <https://study.com/academy/lesson/the-indo-pakistani-war-of-1971-origins-events-consequences.html>



Glossary

1. Indo-Pakistani War of 1971: The war between India and Pakistan that took place in 1971, basically instigated by the struggle for independence in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh).

2. Humanitarian catastrophe: A situation where a large number of people are under widespread threat to their health, safety, and well-being often due to natural calamities, wars or political disturbances.

3. Displacement: The forced movement of individuals or communities from their native land or usual places of abode as a result of conflict, persecution, or natural disasters.

4. East Pakistan: After the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971, this region became Bangladesh, with its unique cultural, linguistic and political expression.

5. Independence Movement: Political and social movement for gaining independence as well as self-determination for East Pakistan from West Pakistan leading to the formation of Bangladesh.

6. Refugee emergency: A condition involving large numbers of people leaving homes who seek sanctuary in foreign countries or regions owing to conflict situations, persecution or other humanitarian emergencies.

7. Global sustenance: Relief provided by national governments plus international organizations such as NGOs in order to relieve suffering and meet basic need

8. Guerilla member: a member of an unofficial military group that is trying to change the government by making sudden, unexpected attacks on the official army forces



Issue Explanation

Following the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971 and the creation of Bangladesh, a great humanitarian cost was placed for all countries involved in the war. There are many controversies surrounding the exact death toll for the conflict, but there have been estimates between 300,000 and 3,000,000³ Bangladesh victims, both soldiers and civilians, murdered by Pakistani military and pro-Pakistani Islamist militias. About 200,000 and 400,000 Bangladeshi women were raped⁴ by certain pro-Pakistani militias in attempt to enact genocidal rape, and a further 8 to 10 million Bangladeshi citizens fled to seek refuge in India⁵. On other fronts of the war, India held more than 93,000 Pakistani servicemen as prisoners of war, as well as an undetermined number of both Pakistani and Bengali citizens who remained loyal to Pakistan⁶. This was no easy humanitarian price to pay on all sides of the conflict.

Shortly after the war, in 1972, the land which was taken from both Pakistan and India, were given back, and the borders which were present between west Pakistan and India prior to the war were restored, but this still left the issue of addressing the large death toll, mental impact and population displacement of the two countries intact. The Bangladeshi population which made a move to India had increased social pressure on India's already everpresent housing and economical problems. The city most affected by this large refugee crisis is Calcutta, which had a great influx of people due to its proximity to Bangladesh. This caused a very large humanitarian problem within the public healthcare and food provision systems, as it was extremely common to see refugees, and even local citizens, fighting for food, water, and medical attention⁷. Living conditions for civilians were already subpar for Indian citizens, but this worsened the conditions for both them, as well as any incoming refugees.

Furthermore, Bangladesh's establishment means that its newly-found economy and social institutions made the state extremely volatile in its early stages, and with over a sixth of its population being displaced, it made it even more difficult to adjust its place in the worldwide community as a whole. The international community needs to discuss what Bangladesh's place is in the UN, and how we can prevent any further conflict over the area to take place by resolving diplomatic tensions between India, Bangladesh and Pakistan, through peaceful means and promoting diplomatic discussion.

³ <https://www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/SOD.CHAP8.HTM>

⁴ <https://indianexpress.com/article/research/birth-of-bangladesh-when-raped-women-and-war-babies-paid-the-price-of-a-new-nation-victory-day-4430420/>

⁵ <https://www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/SOD.CHAP8.HTM>

⁶ <https://archive.org/details/mainspringsofind00burk/page/n5/mode/2up>

⁷ http://www.mcrq.ac.in/RLS_Migration_2020/Researchers_Abstracts_Fullpapers/Abstracts_Worshop_2020/Module%20F/Full%20paper%20Utsa%20Sarmin.pdf



History of the Topic

When India was gaining independence from British colonial rule in August 1947, the population was a large mixture of multiple demographic groups. The largest separation between the population of India was cultural differences. Although many religions were believed in throughout the newly found state, the main two religions of the state at the time were Islam and Hinduism. Furthermore, these two halves of the population also were divided by language used, with Hindi, Urdu and Bengali being the most spoken languages. As a result, the people of both religions wanted to separate themselves due to their cultural differences, ultimately ending up in the land of India being partitioned into two different states: the Republic of India, and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, both founded on the 15th of August 1947.

Despite the content with being separated as a state, as time went on, the people of Pakistan started to observe that there still existed major cultural and linguistic differences between the two sides of the country. To begin with, the Eastern side of Pakistan stood at the complete opposite side of India compared to western Pakistan, and the language spoken within the two sides differ from each other, with west Pakistan speaking Urdu, and East Pakistan speaking Bengali. The cultural differences extend farther than just the language difference, and this caused tensions between the two sides of the country, now being divided both geographically and culturally. With India being the middle ground between the two sides of the country, it was essential that peace should be maintained, in order to not be caught in the crossfire, although the conflict would escalate on a public level when ideas of an independent east Pakistan arose.

The situation changed drastically after the 1970 elections in Pakistan. The ideas of an independent state on east Pakistan's territory culminated in the election of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, a candidate who wanted to fight for the east's independence. West Pakistan's government and population were not very accepting of these ideas, and the candidate did not get any meaningful number of votes in the west of Pakistan, but the much larger population in east Pakistan made it so that he still emerged as the primary candidate. He was ultimately arrested in a coup by western Pakistani soldiers, in an operation called "Searchlight", which ended up even further escalating the tensions between western and eastern Pakistan.

On the 3rd of December, 1971, the tensions culminated in operation Chengiz Khan, a large operation enacted upon by west Pakistan destroying multiple Indian air force bases, almost immediately starting the Indo-Pakistan war. In this war, India's support for the Bengali nationalist movement was solidified, and the war eventually ended in the founding of the Bangladesh state. Although this settled the nationalist conflict in the area, it left behind a humanitarian crisis which had a big effect on not only India, but all of southern Asia as a whole. a whole.



Any Previous Attempts

With East Pakistan being heavily suppressed by the Pakistani government, India declared their support as on May 15 1971, it launched the Operation Jackpot. It was an operation to recruit, train and supply the fighters who were engaged in guerilla warfare against the Pakistani military. After the war had been declared on the fourth of December by India, after the Pakistan Air Force launched strikes towards Western India, it lasted short, but was rather intense. The war ended after intense fighting from both sides on the Western and Eastern fronts for 13 days. The Pakistani's forces were destroyed by the Indian troops. ⁸ The end of the war marked the formation of East Pakistan into the new nation of Bangladesh. On the 16th of December, the chief of Pakistani forces, General AA, Khan Niazi, along with his 93.000 colors surrendered before the Indian service. It has been considered to be the world's largest surrender in terms of the number of personnel since World War II. ⁹

⁸<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/vijay-diwas-1971-indo-pak-war-bangladesh-liberation-explained-8327519/>

⁹<https://www.wionews.com/india-news/1971-indo-pakistan-war-13-day-war-which-ended-with-the-worlds-largest-surrender-of-military-personnel-670262>



Media Contribution

Considering the war involved 3 different parties, their opinions also seem to differ a lot from each other. For the citizens in Bangladesh, the war is viewed as a liberation war, especially with the declaration of official independence, allowing them to raise their own nation. For India the war may not be actively remembered, but it remains central to how both India and Pakistan view each other. India recalls the war as the nation's finest win, a testament to its military power and superiority and as a revenge for Pakistan having 'broken' India in 1947. Having lost the Indo-Sino war in 1962 and having only achieved a ceasefire in the first two wars with Pakistan, the victory in 1971 became symbolic for India, signalling that it was on its way to becoming a regional superpower. Today, politicians, as well as the armed forces, continue to make references to the war, to indicate India's strength vis-a-vis Pakistan. The Indian narrative of the war is a story of gallantry and bravado, championing India as a saviour of the oppressed Bengalis. It is often brought up during any escalation of tensions between the two countries.

In Pakistan, the state has resorted to selective forgetting of what happened in 1971. Perceived as a humiliating defeat, the war is brushed over in textbooks and there is little acknowledgement of the military oppression and the resulting atrocities in East Pakistan. What is hailed as liberation in Bangladesh is awkwardly recalled by Pakistanis as the Fall of Dhaka or dismemberment of Pakistan every December 16. When 1971 is addressed it is often to stress upon the killings of non-Bengalis before the war, presented as a justification for military action. The loss of East Pakistan created a "never again" mentality in the country. Resolving to never let a similar situation arise again, Pakistan increased its defence spending and launched a nuclear programme aimed at developing a nuclear weapon as early as January 1972.

The assignment learned from 1971 was the service has to be stronger to help another defeat. Moreover, in the post-war years, Pakistani textbooks were revised with an overt anti-India and anti-Hindu slant. The loss was criticized as its "arch-nemesis", with little reflection on Pakistan's own programs that resulted in a mass movement for independence among Bengalis. To this day, the Pakistani narrative makes some inflated claims, similar to Indian-told Hindu preceptors manipulating scholars and breeding secessionist sentiments in East Pakistan.¹⁰

¹⁰ <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2019/12/16/remembering-the-war-of-1971-in-east-pakistan>



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