

PRESS RELEASE

The Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention Supports the House Resolution Recognizing the Bangladesh Genocide of 1971

November 1, 2022 - The Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention strongly supports H. Res. 1430, a resolution recognizing the Bangladesh Genocide of 1971 introduced in the House of Representatives by Rep. Steve Chabot (R-OH) and Rep. Ro Khanna (D-CA).

The Lemkin Institute is convinced that West Pakistan (present-day Pakistan) committed genocide against Bengalis and Hindus in East Pakistan, the region that became Bangladesh, during the War of Liberation in 1971. The Institute was the first international organization officially to recognize the 1971 war as genocide in a statement published on December 31, 2021, the last day of the 50th commemoration of the war. Genocide Watch soon followed. We hope to see more organizations follow suit by the end of 2022.

H. Res. 1430 makes clear that the Armed Forces of Pakistan and its Islamist extremist allies committed genocide against the people of Bangladesh. Importantly, it to recognizes genocide committed against both the Bengali and Hindu groups during the Liberation War. Such inclusivity is critical to the project of restorative dialogue within Bangladesh between groups that have specific but interconnected traumas.

Naming the Bangladesh Genocide in 1971 as one of the forgotten genocides of the 20th century, the Resolution further calls on the Government of Pakistan to acknowledge its role in the genocide, offer formal apologies to the government and people of Bangladesh, and prosecute any perpetrators who are still living. The

resolution reaffirms a global commitment to promoting peace, stability, and security in the Indo-Pacific region.

If passed, H. Res. 1430 would be the first official state recognition of the Bangladesh Genocide outside of Bangladesh and India. It would be a momentous step forward in the coordinated effort for universal recognition that has been spearheaded by Bangladeshi civil society organizations.

The Lemkin Institute urges members of Congress to support this important resolution. Resolutions of this sort promote truth and encourage accountability, two things that are critical for human security and a lasting peace. Such resolutions also contribute to a more accurate global understanding of the crime of genocide by offering another case – and another historical pattern – for our educational institutions, comparative analyses, and prevention toolkits.

The Lemkin Institute finally encourages other governments, international organizations, and NGOs to support Bangladesh's quest for recognition and justice. It is high time that the world appropriately commemorates the specific harm committed against Bangladeshis fifty-one years ago and properly honors the lives of the victims and survivors of this terrible crime.

The **Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention** is a US-based nongovernmental organization focused on the prevention of genocide worldwide through education and grassroots empowerment, national and international advocacy, and legal accountability.