

Report on the 6th International Conference on Bangladesh Genocide and Justice

6th International Conference on Bangladesh Genocide

With a special focus on Rohingya Persecution

14-16 November 2019

Liberation War Museum, Bangladesh

Day 1: 14 November 2019

15-00 – Registration

16-00- Inaugural Ceremony Address of Welcome- Trustee, Liberation War Museum Guest of Honor- Hon'ble Minister for Foreign Affairs, GOB Speech from international participants Closing Speech- Emeritus Professor Anisuzzaman

16-50- Book Launch

17-00- Cultural Program by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

17-15 - Opening of the Exhibition "Quilt of Memory and Hope"

Day 2: 15 November 2019

8-30- Registration

9-30- 11-00- Plenary Session- 1 (Auditorium)- Current Issues of Genocide and Mass Atrocity Crimes

Plenary Session – 2 (Seminar Room)- Current Issues of Genocide and Mass Atrocity Crimes (Parallel)

11-00 - 11-15 Tea- Break

11-15 - 12-45 - Plenary Session- 3 (Auditorium)- Ethnicity and Statelessness Plenary Session – 4 (Seminar Room)- Ethnicity and Statelessness (Parallel)

12-45- 14-00 Lunch

14-00- 15-30 - Plenary Session- 5 (Auditorium)- Accountability and Criminal Justice Mechanisms Plenary Session- 6 (Seminar Room)- Rohingya Genocide: Challenges of Bangladesh (Parallel)

15-30 - Tea- Break

15-45- 17-15 - Plenary Session- 7 (Auditorium)- The Role of Peace and Education in Post Conflict Societies

Day 3: 16 November 2019

8-30 - Registration

9-00- 10-30 - Plenary Session- 8 (Auditorium)- Empowerment of Rohingya Community and Future Possibilities Plenary Session- 9 (Seminar Room)- Environmental Challenges and Way Forward (Parallel)

10-30- Tea-Break

10-45- 12-00 - Plenary Session- 10 (Auditorium)- Denialism and Reconciliation Plenary Session- 11 (Seminar Room)- Ensuring justice through art forms and memorialization (parallel)
12-00 - 13-30 Video message by Dr. Gianni Tognoni, Secretary General, The Permanent Peoples' Tribunal Plenary Session- 12 (Auditorium)-Peoples Tribunals in Absence of Formal Justice Mechanisms
13-30 Lunch- break
14-30- 15-30 - Documentary film screening (Auditorium): Exiled by Shahida Yakub or Gallery Visit - Strategic Planning of 2021 with the experts (Seminar Room)
15-30-16-30- - Poster presentation (Lobby) - Meeting with the CSGJ volunteers (Seminar Room)
16-30- Closing Ceremony
Vote of Thanks- Trustee, Liberation War Museum Speech by the International Participants
Dhaka Declaration

Brief introduction to the sessions-

Liberation War Museum of Bangladesh organized an International Conference on Bangladesh Genocide and Justice for the 6th time in Bangladesh with special focus on Rohingya persecution extending from 14th to 16th November 2019. The venue of the Conference was in the Liberation War Museum, Sher-e Bangla Nagar Civic Centre, Agargaon, Dhaka. The conference was joined by 26 foreign genocide scholars and judges from nine different countries including Germany, Argentina, United States, Cambodia, India, Bangladesh, and others. More than 100 registered participants attended this conference; amongst them most were students and young professionals. Partaking of media was great as almost all major print and electronic media disseminated news of this conference with priority.

The core issue of the 6th International Conference was to speak for justice for the genocide victim with special focus on Rohingya persecution. the genocide scholars discussed on many issues including current issues of genocide and mass atrocity crimes, ethnicity and statelessness, accountability and criminal justice mechanisms, Rohingya genocide: challenges of Bangladesh, empowerment of Rohingya community and future possibilities, the role of peace and education in post conflict societies, environmental challenges and way forward, denialism and reconciliation, ensuring justice through art forms and memorialization and people's tribunals in absence of formal justice mechanisms.

The Conference ended up with taking a commitment to stand against genocide and to ensure justice towards the Rohingya refugees. The foreign participants made a collective statement at the end of the conference.

DAY 1: 14th November 2019.

Opening Ceremony

The 6th International Conference on Bangladesh Genocide and Justice started on November 14, 2019 at 4.00 pm at the auditorium of Liberation War Museum, Sher-e Bangla Nagar Civic Centre, Agargaon, Dhaka. **Mofidul Hoque**, Director, Center for the Study of Genocide and Justice (CSGJ) and Trustee of Liberation War Museum (LWM), Bangladesh launched the opening ceremony welcoming all including the respectable foreign genocide scholars, panelists, national guests, participants, representatives of media and others on behalf of all the trustees of LWM. He conveyed tribute to the martyrs '71, tribute to the father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, for whom the dream of independence got a light, and a republic country was born. Then he conveyed his deepest appreciation to the foreign guests for attending this conference for showing their concern on Rohingya crisis and thanking the national scholars for their wide participation. He also addressed that LWM had been organizing International Conference on Bangladesh Genocide and Justice for the 6th time. This time the conference which aims at informing the international community and the young generation of the present time about the genocide that took place against the Rohingyas in North Rakhine? Bangladesh is standing beside them and giving them shelter. This heinous activity once had been experienced by the Bengali nation back in March 1971 in our Liberation war. He also brought the newly found news that Gambia filed a case against Myanmar to International Court of Justice. He also addressed the activities that were going to take place in the upcoming days of the Conference, were paper presentation, poster presentation. He concluded his speech thanking all once including the panelists, young paper presenters, different Ministries especially Ministry of Foreign affairs, volunteers. He also stated his hope for an action plan to observe, to celebrate, to memorialize and to strengthen the global struggle of humanity for truth and justice.

John Hubel Weiss, a political and humanitarian activist centered on genocide delivered his speech on behalf of the international participants. He was delighted to be representing all the other foreign guests. To him Bangladesh seemed different, he used the term 'golden welcome' by the Bangladeshi people. He was inspired also inspired by Rabindranath Tagore and cited a verse from Tagore's poem,

“Where the mind is without fear
and the head is held high,
where knowledge is free.
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic
walls.
Where words come out from the depth of truth,
.....
Into that heaven of freedom, my father,
LET MY COUNTRY AWAKE!”

He connected the words of the poem with Rohingyas. He related in a way that to Rohingyas knowledge is accessible, thus giving them a hope. He also hoped for a better situation for them.

He stated that Rohingyas were always discriminated. He appreciated Bangladeshis' effort to ensure a better place for them Rohingyas, giving them hope.

Irene Victoria Massimino, Rapporteur of the High Criminal Court of Buenos Aires State, Argentina (Criminal Tribunal of Cassation) also expressed her words on behalf of the international participants. Irene addressed her engagement with LWM since 2014. She came from Argentina which is geographically far away from Bangladesh. She has been working on this field for quite a long time. 'Hope' is needed for the time when she feels frustrated working in field, 'hope' is required for the refugees like Rohingyas to keep going. She cited a poem both in Spanish and English. The gist of the poem includes 'reality is transformable.' Thus, this gives us hope. Irene believed that through this conference by interacting and exchanging ideas with each other about the concerned issue she wanted to prove that 'reality is transformable.'

Dr. Hilary Cremin, Reader, Faculty of Education, Cambridge University delivered her speech on behalf of the international participants, profoundly thanking all the teams who worked on organizing the conference. She admired the exhibition gallery of LWM covering the past, present and future of the history of Bangladesh. She included that she had the privileged to visit the Rohingya camps where she could feel the situation. She emphasized on saying that the young volunteers are the 'future' as their dedication was noteworthy.

In the second session of the inaugural ceremony, a book titled "**Quilt of Memory and Hope**" was launched by the joint effort made by Liberation War Museum (LWM) and Asia Justice & Rights (AJAR) In this book the sufferings on women that took place during the Rohingya genocide, was quilted by stitches after stitches. Pia Conradsen, Asia Justice & Rights (AJAR) and Nasrin Riyaz, Asia Justice & Rights (AJAR) were the representative from AJAR to be present at the book launch ceremony.

Pia Conradsen, Asia Justice & Rights (AJAR) and Liberation War Museum (LWM) stated a few words on "Quilt of Memory and Hope." Her journey in Bangladesh was only for a year but she claimed that year as one of the best years of her life working with the museum. She admired the volunteers from LWM in addition. March 2019, they decided to do two weeklong participatory research with Rohingya women inside the camps. They wanted to create a process not only with beneficial for the women also to ensure a process that might heal their sorrows of what happened in Myanmar. They just wanted to bring their positive memories and hope quilted into piece of clothing.

Guest of Honor, Dr. A.K. Abdul Momen, Hon'ble Minister for Foreign Affairs, GOB

He expressed his gratitude to all the scholars, trustees who organized this biannual conference. He recalled the history of hard-earned Bangladesh, the glorious yet the most devastating genocide took place at the birth of this country. He highly appreciated the idea of this 6th International Conference on Genocide and Justice with special focus on Rohingya persecution.

Closing speech was delivered by **Emeritus Professor Dr. Anisuzzaman** who is also the chairman for the Center for the Study of Genocide and Justice (CSGJ). He was delighted to learn that many participants are from both home and abroad making this conference a successful one. He also addressed the genocide that we Bengalis had to face during the birth of the nation. Also, the perpetrators were brought to light to set justice of that heinous genocide. Now Bangladesh is giving shelter to those victims of Myanmar, giving those shelters. He stated that international community never lacked to show sympathy but not taking proper actions for those refugees to repatriate or so. The refugees must go back to their own land with dignity and honor. He hoped for the betterment of the Rohingya refugees asked for the help of the international community. He also appreciated LWM for organizing such a platform to address this buzzing problem.

Vote of thanks was delivered by **Ziauddin Tariq Ali Trustee, LWM**. On behalf of the Liberation War Museum, he thanked the **Guest of Honor, Dr. A.K. Abdul Momen, Hon'ble Minister for Foreign Affairs, Government of Bangladesh**. He also thanked the **emeritus professor Dr. Anisuzzaman** for being there since 1996 when LWM was forming. He thanked AJAR, the paper presenters and the volunteers.

Opening ceremony was then followed by an exhibition named "Quilt of Memory and Hope" jointly arranged by Asia Justice & Rights (AJAR) and Liberation War Museum (LWM). In this exhibition, the victim women of Rohingya who flew to Bangladesh sew their happiness-sadness through stitches after stitches.

Plenary Session 1: Current Issues of Genocide and Mass Atrocity Crimes

Panel 1 highlighted on the subject matter of 'Current Issues of Genocide and Mass Atrocity Crimes.' In this panel there were three panelists named Irene Victoria Massimino, Tahsin Khan and Rafal Pankowski. This panel was chaired by Nicole Janisiewicz, Senior Legal Advisor, Asia Justice and Rights (AJAR).

"Accountability for Genocide and other international crimes: Current possibilities within national and international justice systems." By Irene Victoria Massimino

Irene Victoria Massimino's paper titled, **"Accountability for Genocide and other international crimes: Current possibilities within national and international justice systems."** In her presentation she discussed on making an analysis of the different tools offered within national and international justice systems to pursue accountability for genocide and other international crimes. She addressed the diverse historical experiences and examines the impact of each justice process for discovering the truth, building historical memory, recognizing victims, and creating accountability for perpetrators. She talked about the dictatorship in Chile and at the same time referred the case of Pinochet while talking about the use of universal jurisdiction. In her presentation she also included ICTBD which formed in back in 1973 to punish the perpetrators of 1971 Bangladesh liberation war. Additionally, she referred to the challenges that were faced and those still to be faced in all the options provided by the judicial systems.

Furthermore, within the abovementioned options, she put a special focus on the practice, theory, perspectives, and possibilities of applying the institute of trials in absentia, as well as its future in international criminal law as an instrument to fill existing legal voids. To her, to prove ‘beyond reasonable ground’ in terms of trial in absentia might not be necessary in international conflicts, mostly conflicts on genocide. Finally, she examined each justice process with the aim of providing justice and accountability for current genocides.

**“A Critical Examination of the Potential Involvement of Non-State Entities in Genocide”
by Tahsin Khan**

Tahsin Khan in his paper broadly discussed about the adoption of the Genocide Convention 1948, the question of whether the crime of genocide requires involvement of a state or state-like collective entity has resulted in diametrically opposing views. He stated that the legal definition of genocide contained in the Convention does not expressly require the involvement of states or similar collective entities; they form an integral part in the determination of whether genocide has been committed. Conversely, some opine that genocide can be perpetrated by non-state entities as well as even individuals alone. A close observation of the drafting history of the Genocide Convention seems to concur with the second view. Subsequent state practices as well as the verbatim adoption of the Convention definition of genocide in the statutes of various international criminal tribunals conform to this view as well. The cases decided by the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the International Criminal Court (ICC) also appear to support this proposition. After scrutinizing some other potential scenarios of genocide, it is finally concluded that besides state or state-like collective entities, non-state entities may also be liable for the crime of genocide.

**“The Holocaust in Poland And Genocide in Asia: Does the Tragic Past Bring Us Closer?”
By Rafal Pankowski**

In starting the presenter showed a T-Shirt which has white rose printed in it. Some young Buddhist used it symbolically and politically. It reminds of the Nazi resistant group. Because the same thing was used in the protest under the same name of white rose. The young Buddhist in Myanmar used it knowingly. It shows how analogies can be used to build human solidarity. He pointed that Poland was not a colonial power and for detachment from colonial issues it can be marked more as a colonized country in a positive sense. That is why Poland is kind of free from European guilt. That is why Polish people sympathize more with the oppressed. In World War 2 and in the Holocaust Polish territory is used by the Nazi’s and their collaborators. Same tragic experience provides polish people with the opportunity to connect with these current issues. He also pointed that polish visitors worked for the entries in the case of Cambodian genocide. After liberation Cambodian people compared their sufferings with the sufferings of polish people. There were some books after their liberation in 1979 which refers the connections. The victims of Nazi genocide have similar predicaments with other genocides. That is why the similarities

and differences of victimhood should be traced. It will also show ways to build solidarity. He finished his speech with some questions which will help to understand the problems of genocide and shows way to solve these issues. It will help to prevent genocide and mass atrocity crimes and promote the motto “never again.”

Plenary Session – 2 Current Issues of Genocide and Mass Atrocity Crimes

Rohingya crisis is genocide or ethnic cleansing? The role of international community to define this issue by Md. Riyaz Uddin & Fazilatun Nesa

Abstract

There is a close different between genocide and ethnic cleansing. Genocide refers to the destruction of a particular group where ethnic cleansing refers expulsion of a group from a certain area by violence. Human rights groups and UN leaders have claimed that violence against Rohingya ethnic group is ‘hallmarks of genocide’. But Myanmar denies this genocide and replies it is just a simple security issue of the state. But sometimes their media define it as ethnic cleansing. According to the Genocide Convention 1948, genocide is a crime. The international community also avoid it intentionally. If we look back to Rwanda in 1994 the Clinton government avoided that genocide. If they defined it as genocide they needed help them internationally. As like to Rwanda the international community avoided Rohingya issue intentionally. Because China is a big factor here.

Rethinking Genocide in Asia: A contextual analysis of Rakhine and Assam by G.M. Arifuzzaman

Abstract

Raphael Lemkin, a lawyer of the Polish- decent Jewish first coined the word Genocide and initiated the Genocide Convention by the United Nations (UN). After the Second World War, UN ratified “Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide” on 09 December 1948 just a day before the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). In this convention, five issues were focused as Genocide by acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group. These all are indicated as biological destruction but not focus on statelessness or identity crisis. This paper framed with these statelessness or identity crisis as a new dimension in the genocide in Asia. We have seen the scenario of Genocide in Bangladesh in 1971, Cambodia, West Papua (province of Indonesia), East Timor, etc. These all can be figured by the UN ratified means of Genocide by article II of the convention. The people of these countries were not denied as a part of a citizen by the state. As besides, there were seen wars or civil war of these countries. But, the 1982 Citizenship Law in Myanmar, Rohingya community lost their citizenship with all opportunities of a state. In 2017, thousands of people were killed, tortured by the Myanmar military & its allies. Over 1 million people fled away from Rakhine state and took shelter in the Rohingya refugee camps at Cox’s

Bazar, Bangladesh. Recently on 31 August 2019, the government of Assam in India published the final list of National Register of Citizens (NRC) and over 19 lakh people have been excluded from the list. This NRC has been drawn some principals of Citizenship of Assam can compare as Rakhine situation by the 1982 Citizenship Law. These states have totally denied them to facilitate all kinds of Citizenship rights and propagate them as a citizen of Bangladesh. This creates a humanitarian crisis in both Rakhine and Assam. This paper enrolled the purposive statelessness and generating an identity crisis for the citizen of a state is also an intention to destroy a group or a community. It may be included punishable for the perpetrators and allies by the principal of article III of the convention.

Mass atrocities against Rohingya: Ethnic cleansing and genocide by Prethee Majbahin

Abstract

The horrific mass atrocities against Myanmar's Muslim-minority Rohingyas have stunned the whole world. The Burmese Government has carried out a campaign of ethnic cleansing and committed atrocities including mass killings, arson, extortion, harassment, torture, rape and other forms of sexual abuse. The people of Rakhine state have been subjected to denial of identity and rights. They have been rootless and victims of calculated cruelty. Decades of dehumanization and state-sponsored systematic segregation resulted in more than half a million Rohingya to flee from Myanmar to Bangladesh. The world has encountered one of the vicious examples of human rights violation and refugee exodus. This paper aims to reflect on the massive acts of violence and atrocities against the Rohingya population. Besides, this study will briefly discuss the reasons, why these actions should be considered not only as ethnic cleansing but also genocide. A ten-stage model of the processes that lead to genocide will be used to examine the atrocities against Rohingya by Myanmar which will help to understand the early warning signs of genocide. Though the International community has emphasized on the word "ethnic cleansing" to describe the crimes against Rohingya, we should by now be able to recognize the unannounced and accelerating pulse of genocide.

Panel 3: Ethnicity and Statelessness

“Racial Selectivity in Genocide: From South West Africa to Rwanda” by Kazi Taposhe Rabeya

The presenter tried to find out why genocide happens because prevention needs understanding of these issues. She said that genocide, the crime of the crimes is continuously happening because of avoiding but not admitting. Then she moves towards from which basis the victim can be identified. From her research she found racial selectivity as one of the major causes as it was pointed as prevailing cause in previous genocides. Based on two theories the idea of racial selectivity can be perceived. (Eugenics & Social Darwinism) Eugenics means from a genetic background people can be classified as superior and inferior which surely denies that all men are born equal. Excluding a certain group according this basis as other one clearly indicates the idea

behind genocide. Social Darwinism tries to relate theory of evolution in social context. Both tries to discriminate based on physical features and genetics. She said that the terms “Eugenics” and “Racism” are closely related and can easily be interchangeable. In her research she founded a connection between racial selectivity and colonialism. She tried to show how colonialism and racial selectivity had impacted in genocides. For finding the relation she analyzed three genocides. The colonizers used it as a justification of their immoral activities of colonization. They treated colonized people as inferior and who had to perish away anyway. She pointed that these notions of maintaining superiority can easily turned into genocide if it is threatened by any kind of resistant. She mentioned, Rafael Lemkin also pointed out the cause of genocide is intrinsically colonial. She said it does not mean all colonizers have genocidal intention rather it shows colonialism often commissioned behind genocidal activities. She pointed that racial selectivity worked behind Nazi Holocaust and we can know about it from “Mein Kamph” by Adolf Hitler. In the case of Rwanda, the conflict was between Hutu people and Tutsi people. When Rwanda became colony of Belgium Tutsi people got some bias as they were considered having European origin and tends look like them. Later, these perceptions got more devastating. The impact of racial selectivity is still prevalent in genocide. Also, in Rohingya genocide racial selectivity is a prevailing issue. That is why racial selectivity as the cause of genocide should be more concerned.

“State's 'Sacred Exclusionary Rites' and the Elimination of the Rohingyas” by Md. Rashidul Islam Rasel

Md. Rashidul Islam Rasel at first introduced himself. He teaches ethnicity and nationalism at Jahangirnagar University. His paper focused on ‘exclusion and elimination’ - these two words quite succinctly and sufficiently describe what the Rohingyas, one of world’s most persecuted ethnic groups, have been going through over the last five decades or so. They have not only been deprived of all the citizen rights, but also of very basic human rights. Rohingya refugees were called ‘mad dog’ in Myanmar where the champion of humanity, Gautam Buddha breathed. In today’s era, most of the Rohingyas were either killed or living abroad as refugees- in both ways practically eliminated from their homeland, the historical Arakan, present-day Rakhine state in Myanmar. He asked for the answer that why the Rohingyas had to suffer this terrible fate, it was equally uncommon to find out the answer, for the sake of truth, going beyond the paradigm of the State. To reveal the normalized abnormalities ritualistically practiced in the modern states- in this case, exemplified in Myanmar vis-à-vis its treatment of one of its unrecognized ethnic communities. In his presentation he adopted a critical approach along with genealogical analysis of the human constructs that we call ‘states’. The idea of nationalism in its multifarious roles has also been scrutinized with an especial emphasis on Theravada Buddhist Nationalism and Myanmar state’s continuous effort to fuel, pamper and promote that. He also included in his paper that individuals as well as communities, irrespective of ethnic, cultural, or religious natures, must first be recognized as humans and the norms and ethics of humanity must prevail over that of citizenry. He said, “It is a failure of the modern state that it could not preserve the

trace of humanity, brutally exposed in the forms of genocide or ethnic cleansing, be it in Myanmar or anywhere in the world.” He explained that the states do not really have any long-term solution to these problems unless there is a re-evaluation of the state-centric world view that transforms humans into mere citizens.

“Statelessness and Forced Migration” by Mohammad Sajedur Rahman

Here in this paper the researcher tries to focus on how statelessness within a country causes forced migration which becomes problematic for another country. Particularly it was based on Rohingya issue. He presented the devastating issues from the statistics of UN which says at least 400 villages were demolished. Unlikely they have focused how the host country Bangladesh is suffering because of the statelessness of Rohingya people. Though Bangladesh helped them but challenges now appeared to this developing country. The fund of foreign donors is decreasing. About two thousand crores taka has been lost for the damage happened here. Traditional military security has aroused here because they are two military rival countries. That is why when Bangladesh bought submarine, they also bought it. Apart from that some border disputes are also happening. In maintaining many people some Human Security issues is evolving. Also, Environmental crisis, Illegal Trafficking are creating problem. Rohingyas became a threat for internal security also because they are doing crimes here. From Saudi Arabia, India people are coming here as refugees. Bangladesh is struggling to maintain good international relationship for this issue with India and China. China and India are silent in this issue because of economic interest. Bangladesh government has failed to internationalize the problem. Otherwise, stateless of the people of Assam because of NRC policy may also hamper Bangladesh. So, Bangladesh should take step to solve this problem by internationalize it. Bangladesh also should involve big powers for solving this problem like Russia and Japan. But alas there is no such step of efficient repatriation to solve these problems of statelessness which also marked as forgotten human right issue.

Plenary Session 4- Ethnicity and Statelessness

Plenary Session-4 was held on one of the most important topics that is 'Ethnicity and Statelessness'. There were four panelists in the panel and three papers were presented altogether. The name of the panelists was Sayema Khatun, Zunayed Ahmed, Magna Mahapatra, Chingiz Khan.

The first paper was presented by **Sayema Khatun** named '**Could we have stopped Rohingya Genocide? Understanding from Anthropological Perspective**'. The paper showed us that the genocide was not the result of one day horror. There were certain early warning signs of genocide in Myanmar, but nobody cared about it or simply ignored the fact. As a result, when the genocide occurred, people were unprepared and unequipped for it. She also discussed could we have stopped Rohingya genocide and how we can comprehend genocide from an anthropological

view. She stressed on micro-level study on genocide and justice. As it is a national crisis for Bangladesh, it is our moral responsibility to take steps as early as possible.

The second presentation was on 'Genocide from Nazi Regime to 1971: Diagnosing the disease of contemporary times'. The paper was presented by Zunayed Ahmed Ehsan and Magna Mahapatra. The focus of their paper was to re-examine our pre-ontological understanding of the idea of citizenship and how this challenged presupposed or presumed ideas lead us to genocide with the consent of the masses. Genocide from Nazi regime to genocide in 1971 and now Rohingya crisis, has intrinsically connected with our ontological understanding of being that determines citizens as citizens. They cited Heidegger's view that the job of the philosopher is to seek for an ontology which must be interpretative. By doing so one needs to understand ontology in a phenomenological way. Though genocide is seen as a disease from the lens of phenomenology but according to their understanding a new way of seeing is possible where genocide is merely a symptom of the disease. Their paper is interested as a part of intellectual politics which is more interested about the disease, not the symptoms. Again, they found that the second problem is the role of mass media in shaping consent of people for genocide. However, many masses have already lost their cognitive ability and that is why genocide is no longer a crime against humanity to them. Genocide is not the danger of this despair time, but the real danger is our inability to rethink about what we think. Again, they focused on 'political hygiene' which should be maintained so that the image of otherness is not politically mobilized.

The third paper was presented by Md. Chingiz Khan on the topic of 'Perception of Print Media for the 'Historical' Connection between the Pangals and the Rohingyas. Manipur is one of the northeast Indian states where different indigenous communities namely Meiteis, Muslims, tribes like kukis and Nagas reside since times immemorial. Pangals play a crucial role on social culture and structure. Tribal integrity is maintained by them. Many 'fringes' organizations and association of Manipur like ASUK blamed deliberately towards the Manipuri Muslims. Various propagandas were spread towards the Manipuri Muslims like Muslims never wanted development and on issues like illegal linkage, entry, and settlement of the Rohingyas and Bangladeshis' in the state. He explored the possible 'historical' roots while concerning nexus between the Manipuri Muslims and the Rohingyas. He further explained the roles of local media towards the spread of distorted news between the linkage of Manipuri Muslims and the Rohingyas. Greater sensibility and work without bias should be the motto of the journalists who plays such an important role in shaping the society.

Plenary Session 5- Accountability and Criminal Justice Mechanisms

The name of the plenary Session was '**Accountability and Criminal Justice Mechanism**'. Plenary Session 5 included four presenters. They were Dr. Melanie O'Brien, Md. Pizuar Hossain, Camillah Agak K and Regan Ahmed. Barrister Amir-UI-Islam was the chair of this session.

The first presenter was Dr. Melanie O'Brien who is a senior Lecturer in International Law at the University of Western Australia. Her focus was on examining avenues for accountability that exist for the Rohingya victims against the Burmese perpetrators of these genocidal atrocities. The accountability options were considered in her paper. Again, she examined possibilities within the human rights system, considering Myanmar's engagement with the Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review, and available procedures through treaties to which Myanmar is a state party. She also discussed about the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice, considering applicability of the Genocide Convention and customary international law. She said that Myanmar is a state party to Genocide convention. Any state can act against them. Again, Myanmar is also bound by customary international law. Myanmar also violated 'jus cogens' norm of international law. She added that Bangladesh safe-played as the state did not want to ruin diplomatic relations with Russia and China. Gambia succeeded in filing a case against Myanmar because it is not connected with China. It is small country with a big voice. As one part of the genocide act is committed in Bangladesh. However, her paper examined individual criminal accountability with a focus on the International Criminal Court and its progress on investigating some of the crimes like deportation, crime against humanity, genocide committed against Rohingya and pondering future possibilities before the ICC.

The second paper was presented by Md. Pizar Hossain. The title of his paper was 'Justice for Genocide: Perspectives of Bangladesh Genocide and Myanmar's Rohingya Genocide'. He started his presentation by giving definition of Genocide. There are certain elements of genocide and if any component is present, it will be regarded as genocide. His paper illuminated the perspectives of justice for Bangladesh genocide at the first place. The author showed the prevailing contexts of Bangladesh genocide and the Judgements of the ICT-BD. He also demonstrated the consequences of defining the criminality of the perpetrator of Rohingya genocide. He highlighted the legal implications of jurisdiction of the ICC to prosecute the individual perpetrators of Myanmar accountable as a State.

The third paper was titled as 'The Role and Future of Special Courts in International Criminal Justice: A look at the International Criminal Tribunal of Bangladesh'. Third presenter was Camillah Agak K who is a Kenya based human rights lawyer with special interests in international criminal justice. The focus of her paper was analyzing the genesis of international criminal justice systems, establishment of the International Criminal Court., emergence of international criminal tribunals and the challenges facing the ICC and tribunals alike. Again, the author discussed about the ICT in Bangladesh which is doing a great job and despite from the criticism what other states can emulate in terms of best practices that can be adopted from Bangladesh and other special courts in addressing accountability for international crimes through national mechanism. Due to her unavailability, Ms. Humaira Binte Faruque, volunteer at the Center for the Study of Genocide and Justice, read out the full paper on behalf of the author.

The fourth paper was presented by Regan Ahmed, a Lecturer at the Department of Law and Justice, Southeast University, Bangladesh. His paper was titled as 'Criminal Accountability of the Perpetrators to the Rohingya Crisis: National and International Perspective to Myanmar'. The Myanmar Government specifically the security forces lead by the Tatmadaw (Military), has been found responsible by the UN independent fact-finding mission in 2018 to have committed crime against humanity, genocide etc. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and Amnesty International has also independently and manifestly found the Myanmar Military forces of executing similar international crimes as concluded by the UN mission to Myanmar above. However, in the case of Myanmar, ICC suffers from want of jurisdiction in the absence of UN Security Council referral as Myanmar is not a state party to the Rome Statute. His paper analyzed the obstacles imbibed nationally and internationally for the criminal accountability of the perpetrators and suggested mechanism by which the perpetrators will be held criminally liable and thereby result in justice to Rohingya's and ultimately to humanity.

Plenary Session 6- Rohingya Genocide: Challenges of Bangladesh

The paper titled "*Genocide: Thoughts About 1971 and 2019*" has presented by Julian Francis. Julian Francis grossly narrated his role in the period of Bangladesh's War of Liberation that happened in 1971. Earlier, he was working with Oxfam and helped in publishing "**The Testimony of Sixty**". In the conference, he shared his experiences in relation to the Rohingya Exodus in this contemporary time. He oversaw coordinating Oxfam's refugee relief in the Indian bordering Bangladesh. In the discussion, he explained his involvement in the nation-building process. During his 50 years of friendship with Bangladesh, Julian met Tajuddin Ahmed, the first Prime Minister of Bangladesh, in West Bengal, India, in 1971. He also spoke on the issue of National Genocide Day declared in Bangladesh in recent times. To highlight the Rohingya crisis, he mentioned that exclusionary measures have been taken to prevent birth among the Rohingya family. In his writing, he developed the details of his personal experiences in 1971 and compared the situation then with the situation related to the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar District in 2017-2019. He took the opportunity to remind the readers of the long history related to Muslims in Arakan/Rakhine. Julian also writes about his visit to the Rohingya refugee camps when he was part of a Bangladesh "Citizens Commission for Investigating Genocide and Terrorism in Burma" and called upon the international community to step up and impose far more pressure on the Myanmar Government.

In the same session, *Aiding the Victims of Rohingya Genocide: Challenges for Bangladesh in Dealing with an International Humanitarian Crisis* has been presented by Nusrat Jahan & AHM Shafayatul Islam. In their paper, they emphasized the extension of aids to the victims of the Rohingya people facing genocide. The paper highlighted the key challenges of the crisis, funding and security issues accordingly. Both authors stated that the Rohingya influx has overcast the subsisting response capacities which have an immense strain on livelihoods of the local and ecosystems of the country creating the ambiance in Cox's Bazar more challengeable for the

humanitarian workers to work on the ground. Their paper addresses the challenges that humanitarian agencies in Bangladesh, as well as youth interested in volunteering, confronts while providing humanitarian aids to the Rohingyas due to lack of the resources and the capacity to address both structural and political causes of conflicts. Additionally, the paper addresses how peacebuilding mechanisms can be mainstreamed into humanitarian programs that are existing without cabbalistic additional effort.

Hoimonti Barua has presented a paper titled “*Bangladesh’s Quandary over Rohingya Refugees: Complexities, Capacities and Coping with the Challenges*” mentioning that the Rohingya crisis has its inter and intra history related to the geo-graphical matter. They are standing as pro-Rohingya and anti-Rohingya. As she mentioned that the Rohingya crisis itself is a byproduct of the British imperialism. Once the region known as the feed basket of South Asia now turns into a barren desert. Arguably noted that the politics of nationalism is becoming an instrument of marginalization. In the paper, Barua argues that Bangladesh’s disquietude is partly motivated by internal security threats and this being a human rights issue. The paper also addresses the key issues such as the genealogy of the Rohingyas; complexities of the situation by recognizing the addressing the root cause. Finally, the paper brings forth Bangladesh’s capacity as a country and the role it played so far to uphold its humanitarian approach.

Plenary Session 7: Empowerment of Rohingya Community and Future Possibilities

Md. Khalid Rahman presented the paper titled *The urge of Rohingya for their life and homeland: In search of possible solutions of violations of international law and repatriation of Rohingya.*

Md. Khalid Rahman in his presentation discussed about the decades of persecution and violence, most Rohingya people are now living outside of Myanmar, with the majority fleeing two years ago following escalated persecution and violence by the Tatmadaw (official name of the armed forces of Myanmar) and local community. However, a voluntary repatriation process has been rejected twice by the Rohingya, as they demanded citizenship of Myanmar and safe return to their homeland as conditions of return. Unfortunately, the complexity of the geopolitics and inflexible tendencies of the Myanmar government have made return not possible. International law has been violated and yet no viable promising solutions exist for the Rohingya either to achieve justice for human rights violations or return to their homeland. Bangladesh has been significantly burdened by the large influx of refugees from Myanmar. The people of Bangladesh still support the greater cause of providing shelter to the Rohingya and condemn the perpetrators, as well as looking for solutions from the world community. Therefore, he stated that there were two-fold intentions. Firstly, highlight various legal solutions to the atrocities committed by Myanmar officials to hold them responsible for violations of international law and secondly, explore possible solutions of returning Rohingya to their homeland ensuring restoration of their human rights.

Pia Conradsen presented her paper on the victim women from Rohingya genocide. Many initiatives had been taken to respond to the ongoing crisis at local, national, regional, and international levels to address violations and provide some relief to survivors. At the international level, multiple and overlapping mechanisms relating to justice and accountability have been established to try those most responsible and restore the rights of victims, including the Rohingya. The situation led to trafficking, people smuggling, extremism, intolerance, hate speech, environmental degradation. In her findings, “The Rohingya are very likely to be involved in decades of struggle for fulfillment of their rights. The improving of “unity among the community” would be the helpful process of strengthening the networks to demand rights and improve the quality of their lives in the camps and for their upcoming days. “She shared her experience on listening to all those victim women while drawing on LWM and AJAR’s collaboration while working on ‘Quilt of Memory and Hope’ with Rohingya women survivors. Then she shared their innovative methods, participatory tools and healing processes designed over decades of working with survivors to address the shortcomings, blind spots and ‘cracks’ of transitional justice. While working for they used methods where victims might recall their good past not the horrifying on through their stitches. She also introduced a method named ‘slow cooker vs fast food’.

Shahanaz Parven in her presentation discussed about the cultural and cognitive barriers related to the adoption and usage of water filtration systems by the Rohingya population in Bangladesh, and on the way, they affect the overall health level of the population. The lack of access to appropriate infrastructure for water distribution is only part of the reason why water-borne diseases spread easily among the Rohingya refugees. While indeed the refugee camps are suboptimal from a hygienic and healthcare perspective, and while poor sanitary conditions contribute to the risk of spreading of infections and diseases, it appears that when technological solutions are provided to decrease such risks, these are not immediately adopted by the refugee population, and which led to investigate. The most common diseases observed among the Rohingya fall under the category of water-borne diseases, such as cholera, diarrhea, typhoid, and hepatitis E. The exposure to the infectious agents of those diseases is strongly dependent on the quality of the water, which is accessed, which in turn, in absence of water distribution systems, depends on how water it is extracted. This problem seems to partially depend on the absence of technological means, because the available capacity of the water filtration systems may be insufficient to cover the drinking and cleaning necessity of the population. But also, and more importantly, the problem seems to have an important cultural and cognitive component, which prevents its resolution by purely technological means. There already exists technology which allows, with limited expenditure of capital and electric energy, to filter water extracted from the environment and to convert it into a usable form. The question then arises, as to why the refugee population does not employ a solution to the problem, which is already available. The theory related to the barriers on the adoption of technology in the health sector suggests that six primary factors contribute to preventing innovation from entering and being adopted by rural societies, and we claim that some of them can extend to the refugee populations. These factors are: cost,

legality, time, fear, usefulness, and complexity. To her, an organizational solution to the problem of complexity in the usage of water filtration systems, which might employ was to remove their fear by putting a picture of 'Padauk flower' which they (Myanmar) use as a symbol in their Thingyan Water Festival. Nongovernmental organizations as vectors for the distribution of knowledge related to the installation and usage of the water filtration systems.

Plenary Session 8- The Role of Peace and Education in Post Conflict Societies

In this panel, there were five panelists named Timo Leimeister, Dr. Hilary Cremin, Dr. Elizabeth Maber, Md. Abdullah Bin Mashud and John Hubbel Weiss. Four papers were presented in the session.

The first presenter was Timo Leimeister who is a part of the German Civil Peace Service in the Southern Philippine Island of Mindanao. His paper titled as 'They only Followed Orders: Promoting an Inclusive Group identity in Cambodia through genocide education?'. He talked about national reconciliation after the devastating rule of the Khmer Rouge over Cambodia between 1975-1979 which has mostly received academic attention in terms of analyzing state-institutions. His research was based on socio-psychological factors which explored the role of one Cambodian civil society actor with particular focus on educational impact on promoting an inclusive group identity. It is obviously an important matter for reconciling past and preventing future episodes of mass violence.³⁰ service teacher were interviewed before and after they took part in a 'genocide education workshop' organized by the Documentation Center of Cambodia towards five pre-determined key-elements. According to Timo, inclusive group identities are important.

The second paper was presented by Dr. Hilary Cremin and Dr. Elizabeth Maber jointly. Their paper was named as 'Understanding Genocide with a Special Focus on Peace Education and Prevention'. In this paper the presenters discussed about education's potential role in preventing conflict, hatred, and violence and in building peace. The paper begins with a review of Johan Galtung's theorizing of positive and negative peace and the ways in which activities associated with peacekeeping, peace-making and peacebuilding and said that it can tackle direct, structural, and cultural violence in schools and other educational settings. Peace-making, according to them is responsive and peacebuilding is pro-active. Elizabeth Maber showed a map of political landscape which showed to us how Yangon was changed gradually from 2009-2019. According to them, to ensure a good educational system, political investment is much needed. There should be a positive shift in the field of education such as the level of training and teaching should be changed. Education should not be confined to institution only. Alternative approaches must be encouraged such as peer learning, NGO activities. However, they talked about the idea of 'edu-peace' and emphasized on non-formal education process. Peace education may be harder to put into practice than many policy makers and citizen would hope, and school may well be as much part of the problem as part of the solution. Edu-peace can be a door to unlock the new horizon of study.

In his paper titled *Intolerance and hate to diversity: An Obstacle to greater peace building and indirect journey to inevitable conflict in diverse societies*, Mr. Abdullah Bin Mashud argued how intolerance to diversity creates hatred which may have more devastating effects in future. Hate speech, mass atrocity crimes, massacre happened in Myanmar shows that what may happen due to intolerance to diversity. The presenter said that we live in a diversified society though we tend to deny this fact intentionally or unintentionally. This diversity becomes barrier in working together if people create intolerance. Cultural diversity tends to prove like we and they are other which is completely hindering the progress which we could achieve united. The concept of we and they are promoting intolerance and hate. Nationalism is another criterion from which diversity emerged. Mono ethnic identity had more problems because people find a way to diversify others. That is why we need to build inclusive society so that diversity is eradicated. He mentioned that Archer Blood an American diplomat said that our government has failed to denounce the suppression of democracy which refers to the moral bankruptcy. In the case of Myanmar, they build intolerance towards diversity through their law. He concluded with; we could not ignore diversity rather we should use the beauty of diversity.

The fourth paper was presented by John Hubbel Weiss. He titled his paper as *'Some challenges of Incorporating Genocide into Peace-Education: Reflections of an Educator/Activist'*. The focus of his paper was on how to prevent genocide into a peace education curriculum. He thinks that it requires a critical approach and a broadening understanding of the full intellectual, political, and historical context of the crime of crimes. He added that importance of achievement of justice can be understood by the behavior of state actors. 'Compromise' is important but it opposes justice. Again, everyone gives pressure on the question of intent. But John Hubble thinks that we should worry less on 'intent' and focus on sovereign responsibility instead. In atrocities, not only the state but also people are responsible because they have a duty to stop. 'Ethnic cleansing' is a mere tool to hide genocide. His paper reflected the effects on policy actions and in antigenocide movements of contested definitions of key terms deployed in action situations during antigenocide campaigns, genocide, ethnic cleansing, crime against humanity, marginalization, criminal responsibility, and neutrality.

Plenary Session 9: Environmental Challenges and Way Forward the Rohingya Refugee Crisis in Bangladesh

Dr. Minati Kalo in her presentation focused on the problem of forced migration and refugee that were composed of various major clusters of factors and the network of relationships between Bangladesh and Myanmar, specially focusing on the political environment. Bangladesh is one of the important countries facing the problems of refugees, migrations and displacements being an overpopulated country of South Asia, sharing its borders with India and Myanmar. After the independence in 1971, Bangladesh has started experiencing the constant refugee flight of Muslim Rohingya from Myanmar because of the fear of religious as well as ethnic persecution. The Rohingya people have faced problems of systematic discrimination, statelessness and targeted violence in Rakhine State, Myanmar. For understanding the dynamics of the problem,

the activities of the Rohingya refugee and internationalization of this issue are also singled out for consideration. In her opinion she believed the countries with 'the superpower' were more into diplomacy rather than being human. She later discussed that SAARC's motto is to bring mutual trust and this Rohingya issue could be easily solved by the neighboring countries. Rohingya crisis is a humanitarian and moral issue, a security issue, a development issue and to a growing extent it is issue of an environmental and natural resources. So, this paper analyses the massive influx of the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and their Prosecution in Myanmar has resulted in grave humanitarian tragedy as well as a threat to the environment which calls for urgent action to be taken.

Sadia Binte Siraj in her presentation showed concern on the internal armed conflict when leads to forced migration causes not only human sufferings and displacement, damage to home, but also extensive destruction and degradation of the environment, mainly on the bio-physical environment. Risking their precious lives, Rohingya people fled to Bangladesh by sea or on foot as the result of persecution after the mass destruction of their houses and properties, from the northern Rakhaine province of Myanmar. The United Nations termed this exodus as a "Textbook Example of Ethnic Cleansing". They are being offered all kinds of imminent necessary assistance on the humanitarian ground, but it is the high time to think about the longer-term aspects of the problems on ecosystems and people (both the locals and the Rohingyas) living next to each other. It encompasses multifaceted environmental issues as their camps and the surrounding areas are becoming the most climate-vulnerable region of the country and becoming prime climate-vulnerable 'Hotspot'. Hills and forests were cut down to make temporary shelters, to provide other facilities and cooking fuel, threatening the biodiversity of three ecologically critical areas. According to UNDP Report 793 ha of natural forest land has been encroached, the key cause being collecting firewood, which is threatening. Waste management such as faecal sludge and solid wastes like plastic is another problem which needs immediate attention. Though they are being managed as temporary basis, but long-term combined initiative is required. Water and sanitation though being supplied adequately but poorly managed and in absence of alternative supply it is causing pressure thus the groundwater supply has also been depleted and contaminated. It is a critical situation borne of chaos which not only devastated a delicate balance on Bangladesh's water scares and cyclone prone south-eastern region but also accelerates the Humanitarian challenges for both Rohingyas and local population.

Plenary Session 10- Denialism and Reconciliation

Genocide in the Quagmire of denial by Dr. M A Hasan

He presented how Genocide happened in Bangladesh remain unrecognized. HE pointed out that there were a lot of evidence which proves it as one of the most brutal genocides. Foreign people who were staying in Bangladesh in 1971 described it as genocide. As American had bias towards West Pakistan they tried to minimize the scale of crimes and death tolls. When mass graves were flushed it attracted the human right activists and jurists all over the world. War crime facts

finding committee published a book titled “War Crimes, Genocide and Quest of Justice” which have the evidence of tragic victimhood. But the actual scenario was more devastating because all the evidence could not be gathered; a lot of corpses remain unfound. There may be debate regarding the definition of genocide, there may be debate regarding numbers, but there is no doubt that the Pakistani army and their local collaborators committed horrendous atrocities. All those unspeakable crimes against humanity were buried under heavy layers of impunity. It is noted “The most serious crimes of concern to the international community, notably genocide, war crimes and crime against humanity must not go unpunished and their effective prosecution must be ensured. The emergence of this principle as a norm under international law has changed the parameters for the pursuit of peace.” He painfully said that justice is nearly blind, and truth reclines on the huge shadow of power; Genocide and crime against humanity committed by the powerful states are hardly ever getting addressed.

The second presenter was Mofidul Hoque, Director of Center for the Study of Genocide and Justice. The topic of his presentation was 'Global Politics of Forgotten Genocide'. Genocide is a brutal act of such magnitude that there cannot be any hidden genocide, although there are genocides which have been forgotten. Genocide does not happen in vacuum. According to him, each genocide is unique, while there are similarities in its execution and the broader geo-political backdrop of the genocidal acts. Mofidul Haque referred to Bangladesh Genocide which was one of the widely reported mass atrocity crime of the 20th century. The Pakistani Military junta launched their brutal attack on 25 March, 1971 which was widely reported in the global media. From the perspective of International Criminal law, it is genocide. International Commission of Jurists in their report echoed this demand. But gradually Bangladesh Genocide has fallen out of map and international organizations was silent on this. Though a map of major genocides of the 20th century emerged but Bangladesh could not find its rightful place in the history or in the map.

The third paper was presented by Tetsushi Ogata titled 'Entrenched Narrative Space of Denialism and Counter-Denialism: From Turkey to Japan to Myanmar. The focus of his paper seeks to identify underlying patterns of an entrenched narrative space of denialism of the past genocide and mass atrocities. According to him, denialism is a common trait of the perpetrators. After every episode of genocide comes a struggle for remembrance, and hence the question of how to address lingering denialism of the past. Turkey, Japan, and Myanmar present three examples, historical and contemporary, of the State-sanctioned denialist narratives of the past genocide and mass atrocities that they committed. Such as, Japan and Korea engage in the contested historical memories and wartime responsibilities on the 'comfort women' or 'sex slaves'-issues during world war 2, with Japan offering its expression of apology in the 1990s and later reversing it in the 2010s. The case of Turkey demonstrates that, while the position of state narratives regarding the American genocide is mostly consistent over time, there are still variations in how their denialist narratives are presented across different time periods. Myanmar's systematic erasure

and denial of the Rohingya genocide provides another challenge of the state-sanctioned narratives. He cited that, 'One's man's terrorist is another's man's freedom fighter'. His paper argued that it is in 'in-between narrative space,' where the possibility of dealing with denialism exists. To counter denialism is not merely to deny denialism.

The fourth paper was from Ye Myint Win. He titled his paper as 'The Use of Propaganda in the Case of Mass Atrocities Against Rohingya Muslims: A study of Buddhist-Nationalist Anti-Rohingya Publications in Myanmar'. The focus of the paper was mass atrocities against Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar have received tremendous local and international attention. Missing is the role and impact of Buddhist-nationalist anti-Rohingya propaganda to understand and prevent such mass violence. This paper showed two things, first, how Buddhist-nationalist use anti-Rohingya propaganda to influence individual's attitudes and actions and to propagate Buddhist public support for their idea of protecting race and religion. Secondly, he showed how Buddhist-nationalist propaganda is used as an instrument to create insecurity against 'Buddhism, Buddhist, and Buddhist-nation. 'finally, his paper argued that the use of propaganda is to facilitate systematic persecution against Rohingyas and the failure of preventing massive publications of Buddhist-nationalists explains why atrocities prevention is so difficult in Myanmar.

The fifth paper was presented by Niamot Ali titled 'Global politics of Bangladesh genocide'. The paper reflected the denial aspects of the genocide happened against Bangladesh in 1971. Bangladesh has experienced genocide in 1971. The country has faced crime against humanity. Based on Bengali nationalist and religious identity, three million have been killed along with more than 2 lakh women have been physically tortured or raped from the period of March-December in 1971. With the help of local collaborators, West Pakistani military intended to destroy, in whole or in part, the Bengali group, birth the Muslims and Hindus. He talked about operation searchlight. However, near about 50 years of Bangladesh independence, the genocide happened against its people did not get recognition in global arena. Based on the evidence available in the published documents, the main objective of the paper is to raise voice against the practicing genocide and scholarship.

Plenary Session 11: Ensuring justice through art forms and memorialization

Devon Gulbrandsen in her presentation highlighted 'truth telling' mechanism as one of the art-based methods as the right to truth seemed obvious and integral to transitional justice. Also, the attempts taken at truth-seeking and transparency leaves much to be desired in accounting for truth in formal transitional justice mechanisms. Though truth commissions mandate to discover, clarify and formally acknowledge past abuses, violence is by nature traumatic and are risky to be fully expressed in a public hearing or in courts. Fears of revenge, repercussions can prevent victims from coming forward to tell their stories, and as a result leaves a noticeable gap in a society's collective memory. Her paper presentation focused on demonstrating how participatory visual and other arts-based methods can be used to engage victims by memorialization,

reconciliation, therapeutic, democratizing the truth telling process in a non-prescriptive and collective way to share their truth and lived experience. Victims and survivors of atrocities are usually already among the most vulnerable and marginalized groups that were further victimized in conflict and as a result can be consistently underrepresented. Art has been shown to play a role in confronting cultures of silence, denial or rationalizations societies may hold to draw out a sense of truth or acknowledgement about the crimes or injustices that were committed. While art's function in a transitional justice context is not solely to subvert national narratives, it can stimulate conversations about issues that the public or current governments are continuing to ignore. Depending on the history of a conflict and culture of a society, every context can engage in art and its various forms in different ways. In our work through the Global Initiative for Truth Justice and Reconciliation, civil society actors, victim's organizations, survivors, and other non-state actors engage in both representational art that brings attention to forgotten or unacknowledged victims, as well as memorial art meant to commemorate and remember victims or events. Drawing on cases from East Africa, Colombia, Sri Lanka and South Sudan, this paper will focus on the role of arts methods in contributing to truth, justice, and healing, in the absence of, or beyond formal transitional justice processes.

Kornelis Spaans in his presentation he discussed about ICMEMO, a committee of the International Council of Museums provides a platform for professional exchange among institutions dedicated to remembrance of public crimes. ICMEMO covers only a limited number of sites, victims of other public crimes committed over the last seven or eight decades are not remembered at all in dedicated sites or only in secret. Memorial museums are involved mostly in remembering public crimes committed against minorities. They have a special obligation to humanitarian and civic education. Memorial museums are dedicated, first to the dignified remembrance of the victims, should not serve a political purpose. The subject matter of memorial museums is almost always controversial – and the passage of time frequently appears to encourage, rather than reduce, controversy and the risk of politicization. Given the multitude of historical experiences, memorial museums deal with diverse cultures of remembrance. This diversity, however, also requires a shared set of values such as those enumerated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. States and governments bear a great responsibility for memorial museums and should assure them independence from political directives. At the same time, memorial museums must anchor themselves broadly within civil society. The work of memorial museums is science-based. They are only able to assert themselves against political interests if they achieve a high level of scientific excellence. The key decisions concerning content, education or design should be made mostly with the involvement of survivors, scholars, educators, and local communities. Inevitably, memorial museums must consider the issue of how far one can go in reconstructing the past. The intended purpose and destination of the museum site is a constant subject of discussion. There is, on the one hand, a strong predilection for a new materialization of memories – the experience of 'real' objects – and, on the other hand, a trend towards visualization and experience, in which reconstructions of the past are important. Views on history, memory, authenticity, and imagination engage one another, but are often in conflict

with each other as well. Historical experiences must be integrated into historical contexts without minimizing the personal suffering of individuals. This requires outstanding historical research which can lead to diverging, and sometimes conflicting, perspectives. He further added that there are no 'safe places' in this scientific debate. Perpetrators of public crimes should not be demonized, but rather their ideology, aims and motives should be analyzed to explain their actions. The diverse multitude should be approached similarly.

Natalia Pankowska in her presentation stated that museums are spaces for exhibiting and dealing with the difficult past. Curatorial and Educational Choices and Challenges she critically discussed how museums and sites of memory can be an important field for Restorative Justice: the place for the restoration and reconstruction of memory and identity. Museums can become interactive spaces to help visitors to confront difficult, violent past. She admired Liberation War Museum being one of the safe places to learn from the past. In this context, her paper presented and explored several examples from Europe and Asia, including such museums, sites, and exhibitions as the Topf&Sons– Builders of the Auschwitz Ovens Place of Remembrance in Erfut, Germany; the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw; and the TuolSleng Genocide Museum in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. She critically assessed the choices made by curators and educators of aforementioned museums and sites and addresses the following questions: How to start discussing violent past and one's own complicity in atrocities, how to avoid presentation of hegemonic, heroic or selective version of the difficult past and create tensions in society, how to use appropriately material objects and photographs as a testimony, with respect to victims, how to use appropriately texts; and prevent denial, distortion, manipulation and banalization of past atrocities, how to avoid the trap of sensationalism by showing atrocities and violence and how to keep neutrality and independence in exhibiting difficult knowledge when museums are often political and not neutral, how to present the experience of victims, how to show the story of the rescuers and avoid their instrumentalization and banalization, how to cultivate empathy amongst visitors and utilize authenticity. Some memory studies scholars had argued that 'the Holocaust has set the ethical and legal precedent for atrocities around the world dealing with past violence'. She referred to the experience of Holocaust memorial sites and exhibitions in Europe, including through author's personal work as a museum curator and educator, but discusses other examples of other genocides' representation in this context. The paper also addresses the challenge and potential for museums and memorial organizations to work with ongoing human rights abuses and violence (e.g. genocide of Yazidis as presented by Yahad in-Unum and anti-Rohingya violence in various exhibition displays observed by the author) vis-à-vis memorial museums working with past atrocities and historical examples of violence. How does it influence the mission and work of museums? To what extent the experience of past atrocities can be applied to understanding of contemporary instances of violence, genocide and suffering of victims? How it can be reflected through the museum representation?

Plenary Session 12- Peoples' Tribunals in Absence of Formal Justice Mechanisms

In the beginning to the final plenary session a video message sent by Dr. Gianni Tognoni, Secretary General, The Permanent Peoples' Tribunal Plenary was screened on at the auditorium. The video mainly focused on peoples' tribunals in absence of formal justice mechanisms.

Dr Helen Jarvis had a response to Dr. Gianni Tognoni's video. Since she could not attend the plenary session. On behalf of her, Theresa de Langis read out the abstract from her paper. Here goes the abstract of Dr. Jarvis-

The Permanent Peoples' Tribunal (PPT) was established in 1979 as a direct continuation of the Russell Tribunals on Vietnam (1966-67) and Latin America (1973-76). It is a permanent institution, with a Secretariat in Rome, aiming to give recognition, visibility and a voice to the peoples suffering violations of their fundamental rights, victims who, according to the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Peoples, proclaimed in Algiers in 1976, were marginalized in international law, which had increasingly become the guarantor of the interests of the public and private holders of political and economic powers. The PPT is built around an international network of experts, social actors, and scholars from several countries of Europe, South America, Asia, and Africa. In its 47 sessions and judgments, the Tribunal has accompanied the transformations and struggles of the post-colonial period, the development of economic neo-colonialism, globalization, and the resurgence of war and the International Criminal Court's declaration of non-competence for economic crimes. Of relevance to the International Conference on Genocide and Justice Bangladesh is 2017 judgment of the PPT's Session on State Crimes Allegedly Committed in Myanmar against the Rohingyas, Kachins and Other Groups (held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), which was the first judicial body to make a finding of genocide regarding the Rohingya, reaching its most intense and horrific climax at the very time that the tribunal was meeting. The PPT found that the state of Myanmar has the intent to commit genocide against the Kachin people and the other Myanmar Muslims. Further, the state of Myanmar is guilty of the crime of genocide against the Rohingya; that genocide against the Rohingya is now taking place with ongoing acts of genocide; and that the number of casualties of that genocide will be even higher in the future if nothing is done to stop it.

Theresa de Langis, in her paper presentation discussed about the non-judicial truth-telling forums that had become an important venue to raise women's voices when formal judicial mechanisms are unwilling or unable to deliver justice for survivors of gender-based sexual crimes during genocide and mass atrocity in the recent time. In 2012, the Cambodian Defenders Project convened the Asia-Pacific Regional Women's Hearing on Gender-Based Violence in Conflict, gathering 10 women survivors to publicly share their experiences. She reviewed the achievements of the 2012 Asia-Pacific Women's Hearing, querying how it fared in providing an alternate venue to official TJ mechanisms in accomplishing reparative justice. She stated that what happen to one, happen to all. She further referred "the shame and blame" which is always bore by the female victims; such practices are the root cause for gender inequality. However, she added that these victim women, they are always looking forward to access to justice. She addressed the 'war heroines' who were the victim of sexual violence that took place in 1971 in

Bangladesh liberation war. She asked, 'What shared demands did the testifiers make to justice administered by the state?' To her "Justice always emerges from the State". The presentation emphasized on the specificity of stigma unique to sexual violence crimes, arguing that communities had a much greater role to play than usually acknowledged in effecting justice for sexual violence survivors above and beyond traditional criminal justice adjudication. In shifting the area of justice to the community versus the courts, she hoped to contribute to means that are within the control of each person to remedy structures, attitudes and cultural norms that extend the trauma of violence beyond the actual event and into the lived reality of everyday life of survivors for decades, and that set the grounds for new genocidal violence to remain viable. She suggested that the special status of oral testimony such as in oral history and during informal hearings as well as the risks of soliciting voice from survivors. She concluded her presentation by showing some pictures of testators from Bangladesh, getting consolidation while sharing their dreadful stories.

Naureen Rahim in her paper titled Peoples' Tribunal Confronting the Culture of Impunity: The contribution of Gonoadalot in Bangladesh analysed the case study of Bangladesh Gonoadalot as the example of Peoples' Tribunal. First time War crime trial was held In Bangladesh by the citizens groups on December 29, 1971. Zahir Raihan took that step to form a commission but with his death it was vanished. Then it emerged when Golam Azam became the amir of Jamat-e-Islam who was directly noted as war criminal. Instantly protest was grown by Muktijuddha sangsad. Shahid janani Jahanara Imam organized Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee January, 1992 against anti-liberation forces. The committee gave ultimatum to Golam Azam for leaving by March. Gonoadalot was formed on March 26, 1992 and Golam Azam was trialed in front of million people there. The presenter showed a poster which was asking people to join the hearing. Ten allegations were brought against him in that gonoadalot. Then all these points were told. Three women who was victim of sexual violence gave their testimony for the first time. The court did not give him death sentence because it was not constitutional rather proved him guilty and pointed that legal steps should be taken against him. Then the committee did a campaign which had vast people's acceptance. An investigation team headed by Sufia Kamal was formed to find out war criminals and they soon published the lists of criminals and demanded that they should be trialed under the act of human rights 1973. BNP govt. took hardline and brought sedition charges against 24 of the organizers including Jahanara Imam and later which was dismissed by caretaker govt. in 1996. Shahriar Kabir with other members keeps the issue of trialing war criminals alive. The committee took initiative so that young generation can know the actual truth. When Jamat took the power they almost destroyed all the books published by the protesting committee. Much awaited trial finally appeared before us in 2010. Though gonoadalot is not constitutional rather it emerges the public demand and their fullest opinion against crime. When Abdul Kadir Molla another war criminal was sentenced to death the young people voiced a slogan that "Jahanra Imam er rokto amader dhomoni te." This people's tribunal held in a very crucial time when there was no direction, and it was successful to bring all people together for

fighting against war criminal. Gono Jagoron Moncho (2013) also keeping the voice up so that victims of 1971 can be given justice.

6th International Conference on Bangladesh Genocide and Justice
Liberation War Museum
Dhaka - Bangladesh
14-16 November 2019

Concluding Joint Declaration

Hereby the participants of the 6th International Conference on Bangladesh Genocide and Justice, coming from around the world and Bangladesh:

- Recognize that the State of Myanmar has a long history of discrimination against the Rohingya Peoples based on their identity and religious beliefs;
- Declare that evidence accounts for a long-term and ongoing persecution, discrimination and widespread violence and atrocities committed by the State of Myanmar against the Rohingya Peoples both as an ethnic and religious minority, amongst which mass killings, sexual violence, enforced disappearances, destruction of property, and persecution, have been found;
- Consider that the above-mentioned human rights violations and crimes occurring in Myanmar against the Rohingya population amount to the crime of genocide and crimes against humanity;
- Understand that the international community should collaborate in providing effective and rapid justice to the victims, clarification of the facts, and punishment for the perpetrators;
- Welcome and support four major steps forward that have taken place during the week of the Conference in the search for justice for the Rohingya people, namely:
 - The decision of The Gambia to file a complain in the International Court of Justice and request other countries to join and support its filing;
 - The decision of the Pre-Trial Chamber III of the International Criminal Court judges to authorize an investigation into allegations of crimes against the Rohingya Peoples;
 - The filing of a criminal complaint presented in the Republic of Argentina to open a universal jurisdiction case for genocide and crimes against humanity allegedly committed between 2012-2018 by the senior members of security forces, civilian authorities, political leadership, religious leadership, and company management, as perpetrators, participants and accomplices, and;
 - The 14 November 2019 vote in the United Nations General Assembly 3rd Committee (by 140 votes to 9, with 32 abstentions) for a draft resolution calling on Myanmar to demonstrate genuine political goodwill to ensure the safe and

sustainable return of the Rohingyas and to review the 1982 Citizenship Law that effectively denied citizenship rights to almost all Rohingyas.

- Call upon the international community to provide humanitarian aid to the refugees in Bangladesh in order to ensure clean water, food, sanitation, medical and psychological assistance, education and security;

- Request the international community to ensure the repatriation of the Rohingya Peoples to their land, ensuring their physical safety and recognizing their full human rights, including but not limited to the right to citizenship, education, health and movement;

- Emphasize the general need for justice, accountability, reparation, truth and memory for all victims of genocide and crimes against humanity;

- Recognize the need for the international community to strengthen the efforts for the prevention of genocide and other mass atrocities, with a special emphasis on the need for anti-discrimination policies, criminalization of hate speech and peace-education, both nationally and internationally.

All of the above proposals and demands were thoughtfully presented and debated in the Conference by researchers from Bangladesh and from XX other countries around the world.

Johannes Weiss

Robin

Leah

Theresa Long

H. Coenig

Dhaka

the 16th November, 2019

6th International Conference on Bangladesh Genocide and Justice
Liberation War Museum
Dhaka, Bangladesh
14-16 November 2019

Bangladesh Genocide and its Recognition

The academics, scholars, researchers and young activists joining the 6th International Conference on Bangladesh Genocide and Justice held from 14th to 16th of November, 2019 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, organized by the Liberation War Museum reaffirm their commitment to prevent genocide, ensure justice for mass atrocity crimes and create a world of peace, harmony and tolerance.

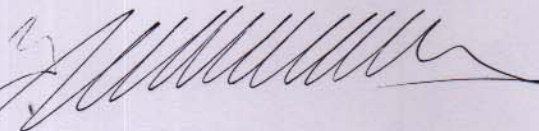
The participants take note of the forthcoming birth centenary of great leader of Bangladesh and of the oppressed nation's struggle for self-determination, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in 2020 and fiftieth anniversary of Bangladesh genocide and its independence in 2021, as an occasion to observe with due importance.

The 50th anniversary of Bangladesh genocide offers an opportunity to all to memorialize, analyse and study this genocide from different perspectives in order to make 'Never Again' sustainable and permanent. The occasion calls for commemoration and memorialisation to learn the lessons of history and educate the new generations with ideals of peace. At the same time it calls for bringing back into global memory the Bangladesh genocide and give it due recognition.

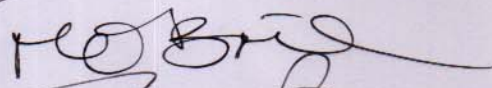
The participants reiterate their commitment to take the message of the conference to their respective field of work and contribute to strengthen solidarity among the community of academics, scholars and activists to promote the culture of peace.

Dhaka
the 16th of November, 2019

H. Cremin



John Weis



Theresa Hanj's