



## **United Nations Security Council's Role in the Liberation War of Bangladesh: Critical Analysis**

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*Received: 02-11-2023*

*Reviewed: 03-11-2023*

*Accepted: 04-11-2023*

### **Abstract**

Bangladeshis began their fight for independence on March 26, 1971, as a response to Pakistani rule that was unfair to their race and treated them like a colony within their own country. Between the start of the Liberation War and November, the UNO's main job was to provide aid and support for civilians. When India and Pakistan went to war on December 3 over the Liberation War, the UN Security Council got very busy. The Security Council met nonstop during this time and discussed many ideas and counter-proposals. Two superpowers of this time, USA and the Soviet Union, took opposing positions in the Security Council. United States and China sided with Pakistan while Soviet Union sided with Bangladesh (East Pakistan). In the Security Council, France and Britain remained neutral and did not vote. The Security Council could not reach a consensus. After debate and vote in the Security Council, the agenda was transmitted to the General Assembly on 6 December. General Assembly passed a 'Unity Formula for Peace' resolution by an overwhelming majority on December 7. India and Bangladesh rejected this idea; therefore, the US called a second Security Council session. The Security Council met from 12 to 21 December at various times. Bangladesh's independence on December 16 altered everything. International representatives acknowledged reality and unanimously approved a ceasefire agreement on December 21, resolving the long-awaited Bangladesh problem.

**Keywords:** War, Liberation, Security Council, United Nations, Bangladesh

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## **Introduction**

The armed struggle for Bengali independence in 1971 took on an international dimension; towards the end of the war, India and Pakistan became directly involved, and the great powers and their influential countries competed for the development of Bangladesh as an independent state. This activity, in addition to bilateral and regional forms, featured international and global components (Jahan, 2008:245). In this scenario, the UN was the bigger platform where the main powers and parties played various roles. The United Nations is a worldwide organization in which decisions are made and executed mostly by consensus of the world's leading nations. The decision-making process is heavily influenced by how the main powers see a given problem. In the case of an impasse in the UN Security Council, the General Assembly can take certain limited steps. All of these occurred during the Bangladesh crisis in 1971 (Matin, 1990: 23). Bangladesh emerged on December 16, changing the subcontinent's map. The UN has mostly participated in relief and humanitarian activities. In the name of national integrity, internal affairs, etc., the Pakistani military tried to repress East Pakistani calls for liberation by genocide and ethnic persecution, but Bangladesh beat them. Bangladesh's emergence after breaking the post-World War II state framework was plausible. Bangladesh joined different UN agencies in 1972 and became a full member in 1974 (Hussain, 2012:189). There is little information on the involvement of the United Nations in the Great War of Liberation. The debate study is critical, and the logical researcher has made a concentrated effort via this article to analyses the function of the organization responsible for world peace and security during the Great War of Liberation and unearth information.

## **Objective of Research**

The United Nations Security Council played a complex and multifaceted role in the War of Liberation of Bangladesh, with its objectives ranging from addressing the humanitarian crisis to influencing international diplomacy and regional stability.

- a. To Investigate Diplomatic and Political Engagement Explore the diplomatic efforts of the Security Council in mediating between conflicting parties, including Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh, and analyze the role of international diplomacy in shaping the outcomes of the war.
- b. To Assess the Role of Superpower Politics, Examine the influence of Cold War dynamics and the involvement of superpowers like the United States and the Soviet Union in the Security Council's decisions and actions during the Bangladesh Liberation War.
- c. To Evaluate the Implications for Regional Stability, assess how the Security Council's actions and decisions during the war impacted regional stability in South Asia and the broader global context, considering the long-term consequences.

## **Research Methodology**

The article titled 'The Role of the United Nations Security Council in the War of Liberation of Bangladesh' has all of the basic aspects of sociological research. Data was gathered from secondary sources for research purposes. The research was carried out using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The research paper titled 'Role of the United Nations in the Great Liberation War of Bangladesh - An Analysis' has been examined using the 'Content Analysis Methodology'. Essentially, the study effort was done using secondary sources to acquire and analyze data and information.

## ***Source of information***

Secondary sources are used directly or indirectly in the research. The study was done by gathering information from the world media, UN documents, publications, research papers, reports, archives relating to the liberation war, and records housed in the museum during the Bangladesh Liberation War (1971).

## **Results and Discussion**

### **1606<sup>th</sup> Session of the Security Council (December 4, 1971)**

When India became engaged in the Pakistan War on December 3, there was a fear of peace and security disturbance in one of the world's most populated regions. Both nations reported the incident to the UN Secretary General on December 4. The Secretary-General, taking the situation seriously, sought a Security Council session from the Council's President, Jakob Malik (Soviet Union) (The New York Times, 4 December 1971).

The Security Council holds its 1606th session on December 4, 1971, with five permanent members (the United States, the Soviet Union, China, the United Kingdom, and France) and ten non-permanent members (Argentina, Belgium, Burundi, Italy, Japan, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and Syria). Prior to the Security Council meeting, the leader of Bangladesh's delegation, Justice Abu Saeed Chowdhury, requested that the President of the Security Council speak on behalf of the Mujibnagar administration. The President of the Security Council recommended at the start of the meeting to listen to Justice Abu Saeed Chowdhury's address as the representative of the people of Bangladesh. There was a lengthy debate in the Security Council over hearing the statement of Bangladesh's delegate, Justice Abu Saeed Chowdhury. In response to the criticism, the council's president issued two proposals:

1. Let the letter of representative of Bangladesh, Justice Abu Saeed Chowdhury, be distributed as a document of the Security Council.
2. As a representative of people of Bangladesh, Justice Abu Saeed Chowdhury should be given the opportunity to speak in this council.

The majority of nations did not fundamentally object to the speech's delivery; therefore, the President of the Council issued a decision in which the demand to deliver the paper was

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accepted. However, the President declined to comply with the second proposition put forth by Justice Chowdhury in response to his request to join the Security Council deliberations, as it failed to garner the requisite backing (UN Doc, S/PV/1606).

The Security Council invited India and Pakistan to speak. Agha Shahi, Pakistan's UN Permanent Representative, spoke first. In his lengthy statement, he accused India of breaching Article 2(4) and 2(7) of the UN Charter and asked the UN to safeguard Pakistan's national integrity. At the UN, India's Permanent Representative Samar Sen remarked, "The enemy avoids the primary problem and accuses India needlessly. He stated this issue was caused by oppressing seven crore Bengalis with weaponry. Although Yahya Khan predicted Sheikh Mujib's rise to Pakistani prime ministership, his fate remains unknown. Samar Sen backs Bengali independence since Bengalis have won elections but not power. They also formed nonviolent movements, but massacres suppressed them. Their claim for self-determination is justified. He proposed a ceasefire between Pakistan Army and Bangladesh, not India and Pakistan.

### **1. The Resolution of the USA to Security Council (S/10416)**

Following the keynote addresses by Indian and Pakistani delegates, US Representative George Bush (Sr.) accused India of aggression. He presented a seven-point resolution that included a 'immediate ceasefire between India and Pakistan, withdrawal of both countries' armies to their respective borders, deployment of United Nations observers on the India-Pakistan border, and taking all necessary steps for the repatriation of refugees' (UN Doc, S/10416). The US proposal was discussed by all Security Council members.

### **2. The Proposals by Belgium, Italy and Japan (S/10417)**

Following the US suggestion, Belgium, Italy, and Japan presented the Security Council with a five-point draught resolution. According to the draught resolution, 'the governments of both countries are called upon to immediately cease hostilities and all forms of hostility and to take necessary measures for the rapid and voluntary repatriation of refugees in accordance with the principles set forth in the UN Charter' (UN Doc, S/10417).

### **3. The Resolution of the Soviet Union to the Security Council (S/10418)**

In response to the American proposal, the Soviet Union offered a two-point draught plan for the cessation of hostilities in East Pakistan in the United Nations Security Council's 1606<sup>th</sup> resolution. The Soviet proposal called for a "political solution in East Pakistan that would end hostilities there while also putting a halt to all terrorist activities by the Pakistan Army in East Pakistan" (UN Doc, S/10418).

### **4. The Proposals by Argentina, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone and Somalia (S/10419)**

The Soviet Union proposed a two-point draught resolution (S/10419) to the Security Council, and in response, Argentina, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, and Somalia submitted their own version. As stated in the proposed resolution (UN Doc, S/10416), "immediate ceasefire and withdrawal by both countries" are demanded, and the Secretary-General is asked to keep

the Security Council updated on developments. The 1606th meeting of the Security Council saw the introduction of four resolutions. The United Nations' proposal was one of four submitted to a vote by the President of the Security Council for acceptance by the member nations after much discussion and debate.

**1<sup>st</sup> veto of the Soviet Union in favor of Bangladesh in the Security Council (S/10416)**

<b>In favor of the US proposal</b>	<b>Abstain from voting</b>	<b>Against the US proposal</b>
Belgium, Burundi, Italy, Japan, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Syria.	United Kingdom, France	Soviet Union, Poland

The United States' accusation of India's troop withdrawal received 11 affirmative votes in the Security Council, with only the Soviet Union and Poland dissenting. The United Kingdom and France both chose not to cast a vote. The Soviet Union, a permanent member of the Security Council, used its veto to kill the plan. UN Doc, S/PV/1606: 357–71) This was the 106<sup>th</sup> time the Soviet Union used its veto in the Security Council.

**1607<sup>th</sup> Emergency Session of the Security Council (December 5, 1971)**

At 2:30 p.m. on December 5, 1971, the 1607th meeting of the Security Council took place on December 4, 1971. The unique thing about this session is that two countries that are not on the Security Council are allowed to talk: Tunisia in Africa and Saudi Arabia in Asia. They went to the meeting because the President of the Security Council asked them to. This meeting of the Security Council was led by Mr. I.B. Tarlor-Kamara (Sierra Leone) (UN Doc, S/PV/1607).

**The Resolution of China (S/10421)**

China proposed a resolution this session. India was considered an aggressor state and criticized for establishing Bangladesh by China. UN Doc, S/10421, states that China "demands the unconditional and immediate withdrawal of the Indian army occupying Pakistani territory". Tunisia's envoy spoke after China's draught proposal. He advised them "The Security Council should also call for a ceasefire, so that peace can be established according to the various clauses of the Charter". Then the Asian Saudi delegate spoke. He urged for a conference of Asian heads of state on the subcontinent "to get rid of the politics of the big powers," said Saudi envoy Jamil Baroodi. According to S/10422 (December 5, 1971), the Soviet delegate mentioned a draught suggestion after the Saudi representative.

The Soviet Union stated that a 'ceasefire may be a temporary solution, but a permanent solution would need a political accord between India and Pakistan'. The Soviet ambassador accused the US and China of disregarding two basic issues for the sake of "temporary interests." Following the Soviet representative's statement, the representatives of Pakistan and India delivered their speeches in the Security Council. Following the speeches of Pakistan and India, the President of the Security Council informed the Security Council that the

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Council now has three resolutions: S/10418 (Soviet Union Resolution), S/10421 (China Resolution), and S/10423 (8 Nations Resolution). The 8-nation resolution (S/10423) supplements resolutions S/10417 and S/10419, which were submitted by the same state, and so the two resolutions are no longer before the House. First, the President of the Council opted to vote on the Soviet motion (UN Doc, S/PV/1607:75-201).

**Consequences of the Soviet Union's (S/10418) proposal**

<b>In favor of the Soviet Union</b>	<b>Abstain from voting</b>	<b>Against the proposal Soviet Union</b>
Soviet Union, Poland	United States, United Kingdom, France, Argentina, Belgium, Burundi, Italy, Japan, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Syria	China

The idea was defeated due to the Chinese veto. This idea was likewise rejected by the majority of the members. Not only had that, but those who did not vote also rejected the proposition during the speech. Following the voting on the Soviet proposal, when the President of the Council made the initiative to vote on the Chinese proposal (S/10421), the Chinese delegate stated that they were still talking with Council members. There was no vote on the Chinese proposal since China expressed no interest in putting it to a vote. The Council President then voted on the 8-nation draught proposal sponsored by Argentina.

**2<sup>nd</sup> veto of the Soviet Union in favor of Bangladesh in the Security Council (S/10423)**

<b>In favor of the 8-nation proposal</b>	<b>Abstain from voting</b>	<b>Against the US proposal</b>
USA, China, Argentina, Belgium, Burundi, Italy, Japan, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Syria.	United Kingdom, France	Soviet Union, Poland

11 supported this proposition. France and the UK abstained. The USSR and Poland opposed. Since the Soviet Union opposed the eight-nation armistice again, it failed (UN Doc, S/PV/1607: 230-331). After the 8 Nations' resolution voting, the French representative called such motions and counter-motions 'presumptive' The Security Council President notified the Council of two further resolutions (S/10421) and (S/10425) after the 8 Nations resolution voting. The Council president asked Security Council members to find a solution and delayed the discussion until 3.30 pm the next day.

**The Proposals by 8 Nations (S/10423)**

The eight Provisional Council members (Argentina, Belgium, Burundi, Italy, Japan, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, and Somalia), led by Argentina, put up a three-point proposal

during this Security Council session. The resolution called for a cease-fire and the establishment of conditions conducive to refugee return (UN Doc, S/10423).

### **The Proposals by 6 Nations (S/10425)**

At the 1607<sup>th</sup> session of the Security Council, six nations—Belgium, Italy, Japan, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone and Tunisia—proposed another three-point resolution. This proposal states-

- Calls upon the Governments concerned forthwith, as a first step, for an immediate cease-fire.
- Request the Secretary General to keep the Council promptly and currently informed of the implementation of this resolution.
- Decides to continue to discuss the further measures to be taken in order to restore peace in the area (UN Doc, S/10425).

### **1608<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Security Council (December 6, 1971)**

The 1608<sup>th</sup> Security Council session was place at 3.30 pm on December 6, 1971. This session, like the previous ones, allowed India, Pakistan, and Tunisia from Africa and Saudi Arabia from Asia to debate. I.B. Tarlor Kamara (Sierra Leone) convened this Security Council session (UN Doc, S/PV/1608:1-5).

### **The Resolution of Soviet Union (S/10426)**

Soviet delegate offered a new resolution with two revisions to the six-nation draught resolution (S/10425) early in this session. (In operative paragraph 1, replace 'the Governments concerned' with 'all parties concerned' and add 'and cessation of all hostilities').

### **The Unity Formula for Peace Proposal (S/10429)**

Due to Security Council impasse, the 11 member nations discussed bringing the issue to the General Assembly informally. After these talks, the six Security Council countries—Argentina, Somalia, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, Burundi, and Japan—presented a draught resolution (S/10429) to the Council, recommending:

'In the absence of consensus among the permanent members of the Security Council at its 1606<sup>th</sup> and 1607<sup>th</sup> meetings, the matter (S/10429) be referred to a special session of the United Nations General Assembly in accordance with resolution [377 A (V)] adopted by the General Assembly in 1950' (UN Doc, S/10429).

This proposal followed the 3 November 1950 General Assembly decision [377 A (V)]. Many call it 'Unity for Peace Exercise'. Since the UN Security Council is deadlocked, the General Assembly implements portions of this formula for world peace and security.

### **The Resolution of Soviet Union (S/10428)**

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To conclude this session, the USSR proposed another draught resolution. The USSR submitted a five-point draught resolution stating that "all parties concerned should immediately cease hostilities and implement a cease-fire." As per the 1970 elections, Pakistan should find a political solution to cease hostilities. The UN Secretary-General should execute this decision and continue peace talks in the area. To take initiative, the Security Council President voted for the Unity Formula for Peace resolution (S/10429) after a brief debate of the other resolutions. The Soviet and Chinese proposals were unlikely to pass.

### **Consequences of the Unity Formula for Peace proposal in the Security Council**

<b>In favor of the US proposal</b>	<b>Abstain from voting</b>	<b>Against the US proposal</b>
USA, China, Argentina, Belgium, Burundi, Italy, Japan, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Syria	***	United Kingdom, France, Soviet Union, Poland

After this plan was approved, the UN implemented the Unity Formula for Peace (UN Doc, S/PV/1608) to end the subcontinental conflict. China initiated this UN General Assembly motion to safeguard Pakistan.

### **26<sup>th</sup> (Special Session) of the General Assembly**

According to the Security Council's December 6 decision, the 26th extraordinary session of the General Assembly was convened at the UN on December 7. The 26th General Assembly Special Session had 3 proposals.

- A.** Proposal by 13 countries (A/L/647)
- B.** The Argentine-led by 34-nation proposal (A/L/647 Rev.) and the Soviet proposal (A/L/646) were discussed in detail. On December 7, the General Assembly debated for 12 hours on 3 draft proposals. 58 of the 131 states of the General Assembly participated in the discussion.

#### **The Resolution of 13 States to the General Assembly (A/L/647)**

At the beginning of this session, 13 member states presented a draft resolution for discussion in the General Assembly. The key points of the 13 states' proposals were-

- A.** Call upon India and Pakistan for an immediate ceasefire and withdrawal of the armies of both countries to their respective borders.
- B.** Strengthen refugee repatriation efforts.
- C.** The Secretary-General shall call for the implementation of General and Security Council resolutions.
- D.** Call on the Security Council to take appropriate action in light of the present resolution (UN Doc, A/L 647).

#### **The Resolution of 34 States to the General Assembly (A/L/647 Rev-1)**



The General Assembly received a draught resolution from 34 governments, led by Argentina and backed by the US, Muslim nations, and China. 'Immediately effective Indo-Pakistani ceasefire and evacuation of Indian troops from East Pakistan, respecting the concept of the integrity of Pakistan' was the 34-state resolution's heart.

**The Resolution of Soviet Union (A/L/648)**

The Soviet Union's proposal states, "Ceasefire may be a temporary solution, but a permanent solution requires a political agreement between India and Pakistan" (UN Doc, A/L 648).

**Countries Participating in the Debate in the Special Session (26th) of the United Nations General Assembly**

<b>Asia</b>	<b>Africa</b>	<b>Europe</b>	<b>Middle and South America</b>	<b>Others</b>
Bhutan	Algeria	Albania	Argentina	Australia
Sri Lanka	Burundi	Bulgaria	Brazil	Fiji
China	Chad	Czechoslovakia	Chile	New Zealand
Cyprus	Gabon	Denmark	Ecuador	United States
India	Ghana	France	Mexico	
Indonesia	Ivory Coast	Greece	Nicaragua	
Iran	Madagascar	Italy	Peru	
Japan	Mauritania	Netherlands	Uruguay	
Lebanon	Sierra Leone	Poland		
Malaysia	Somalia	Portugal		
Mongolia	Sudan	Soviet Union		
Nepal	Tanzania	Sweden		
Pakistan	Togo	Britain		
Saudi Arabia	Tunisia	Yugoslavia		
Turkey		Hungary		
Jordan				
Quake				
<b>17 countries</b>	<b>14 countries</b>	<b>15 countries</b>	<b>8 countries</b>	<b>4 countries</b>

*Source: Prepared by reviewing various UN documents*

After discussion in the General Assembly, the President of the Assembly, Adam Malik (former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia) accepted the proposal of 34 states, led by Argentina, for voting in the General Assembly (amended) out of the 3 proposals under Rule 93 of the Rules of Procedure.

**Voting results on 34 state resolutions in the General Assembly**

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<b>34 in favor of the State proposal</b>	<b>Abstain from voting</b>	<b>Against the proposal of 34 states</b>
104 states	11 states	16 states

It was supported by 104 nations. Negative vote from 16 nations. 11 nations cast no votes. General Assembly resolution sent to Security Council for execution same day. UN Under-Secretary-General telegraphed India and Pakistan of the General Assembly's resolution (UNGA Resolution, 2793).

### **1611<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Security Council (December 12, 1971)**

Even though the UN General Assembly adopted the ceasefire resolution, the battle continued and Pakistan soldiers in Dhaka fell. George Bush (Senior) requested a rapid ceasefire from the Secretary General at the Security Council meeting on December 12 (S/10444). At four in the afternoon, the Security Council conducted its 1611th meeting. This summit included a strong Indian delegation led by Foreign Minister Sardar Swaran Singh. However, Pakistan increased diplomatic efforts and sent a mission led by recently appointed Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (UN Doc, S/PV/1611).

### **The Resolution of the United States (S/10446)**

A draught resolution was brought to an emergency Security Council meeting on 12 December by the US. UN Doc, S/10446, asked for 'prompt ceasefire and troop withdrawal' in the seven-point resolution. This Security Council decision divided the US and USSR. China and the US publicly supported Pakistan. The council president suspended the meeting at 12.35 pm to reconvene the next day.

### **1613<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Security Council (December 13, 1971)**

The Security Council had its 1613<sup>th</sup> session at 3 p.m. on December 13. In addition to Security Council members, India, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Tunisia attended this meeting. The conference opened with US draught resolution (S/10446) talks. The Council president let Poland's representative speak first. George Bush, US representative, said, India bears the major responsibility for broadening the crisis by rejecting the UN's efforts to become involved, even in a humanitarian way, in relation to the refugees, rejecting proposals like our Secretary General's offer of good offices, which could have defused the crisis, and rejecting proposals that could have started a political dialogue.

Chinese envoy Chiao remarked, "India conspires with Bengali refugees like Tibetan refugees." He called India a "outright aggressor" pursuing South Asian domination. He further said the Soviet Union is the principal backer of Indian aggression. China wants a ceasefire and the evacuation of both nations' forces (UN). Doc, A/PV 2002: 141-146).

In his speech, the Soviet Union delegate observed, 'The businesspeople and fanatics who brought this subject to the General Assembly have chosen to ignore the true situation in India. Instead of examining the situation, they are hiding the major reasons of the dispute.

This endeavor was dubbed China-US Collude. China alleges exploiting the conference for anti-Soviet propaganda (UN Doc, A/PV 2003: 173-185). After debate, the Council President voted to accept the United States amended draught resolution (S/10446/Rev.1) by Security Council member states. UN Doc, S/PV/1613: 174—The Soviet Union, a permanent Security Council member, vetoed the cease-fire request for the third time.

**3<sup>rd</sup> veto of the Soviet Union in favor of Bangladesh in the Security Council  
(S/10446/Rev.1)**

<b>In favor of the US proposal</b>	<b>Abstain from voting</b>	<b>Against the US proposal</b>
USA, China, Argentina, Belgium, Burundi, Italy, Japan, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Syria	United Kingdom, France	Soviet Union, Poland

**The Proposal by Italy and Japan (S/10451)**

This Security Council session saw Italy and Japan offer another draught resolution after voting on the US proposal. This proposal had nine points. The resolution aimed to 'maintain the national integrity of Pakistan and achieve a comprehensive political solution to this situation' (UN Doc, S/10451).

**1614<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Security Council (December 14, 1971)**

The 1614<sup>th</sup> Security Council meeting began at 12.10 pm on December 14. This conference failed to reach a consensus. Britain spoke with other Council members, mainly France, to create a fresh plan that would satisfy everyone. Poland also presented a six-point ceasefire draught resolution (S/10453) to the Council President.

Here, the Security Council meeting system was addressed. After discussing their recommendations, Britain and Poland requested that the conference be deferred until the next day for government orders. All Council members agreed, save China's moderate reservations. To permit formal deliberations on the British-French and Polish proposals, the Council President postponed the meeting (UN Doc, S/PV/1614: 49).

**1615<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Security Council (December 15, 1971)**

The 1615<sup>th</sup> Security Council meeting was conducted at 7.20 pm on December 15. At the Council President's request, India and Pakistan delegates attended this meeting. Meeting attendees discussed four draught suggestions. Polish proposal (UN Doc, S/10453/Rev-1), France and Britain's resolution, Syria's resolution, and Soviet Union's resolution. Polish proposals included 'ceasefire and departure of West Pakistani soldiers from East Pakistan'. "Pakistani political prisoners should be released, so that they can implement their mandate in East Pakistan" declared the Syrian draught resolution. After consultations, the UK and France proposed a Syrian-like draught resolution. The concept addresses ceasefire in the east and west of the subcontinent individually. The idea called for political settlement discussions with

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elected officials. Britain, France, and the Soviet Union made similar proposals. The Soviet Union demanded a thorough political solution with East Pakistan's elected representatives. A cease-fire must also be announced (UN Doc, S/PV/1615).

The Chinese representative began with a speech. China's representative said, 'The Security Council should respect Pakistan's independence, sovereignty, national unity and geographical integrity' (UN Doc, S/PV/1615: 13). The President of the Council asked the Sri Lankan representative to speak after the Chinese speaker (UN Doc, S/PV/1615: 13). The Council President invited the Sri Lankan delegate to speak after the Chinese representative. Sri Lankan representative: "Sri Lanka seeks a neutral solution. He said, 'This solution should be one where triumph is devoid of difficulties, loss is without consequence and above all peace prevails' (UN Doc, S/PV/1615: 22). Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's statement on these suggestions was spectacular. The Security Council was strongly criticized in his passionate statement. He called the Security Council a 'stage of deceit and farce' He instructed the Security Council to legalise every unlawful occurrence until December 15, establish a worse treaty than Versailles, and legalise the occupation. We will fight without me. I shall withdraw but fight again. My country calls. Why waste time on the Security Council? I refuse to participate in such a disgraceful surrender of my nation. He urged the General and Security Council to remove the 'monument of failure' He concluded his Security Council remarks. They rip up draught resolutions of four nations, including Poland, and I go (UN Doc, S/PV/1615: 84). Pakistani delegates left the Security Council. Pakistani delegates left the Security Council. Accepting Poland's suggestion (UN Doc, S/10453) may have benefited Pakistan. India 'although grudgingly' approved the idea with Soviet help. The Pakistani military would not have surrendered humiliatingly if the delegates had accepted the idea.

The Council President called Poland's proposal timely out of 4 draughts. The Security Council discussed four draught ideas, but none of the member nations indicated interest in voting. Instead, they continued to deliberate. Thus, the Council President adjourned the meeting till 10.30 am on December 16 (UN Doc, S/PV/1615:139).

### **1616<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Security Council (December 16, 1971)**

The 1616<sup>th</sup> Security Council meeting was conducted at 10:30 am on December 16. The Security Council President invited Indian Foreign Minister Sardar Swaran Singh, Saudi Ambassador Mr. Jamal Baroodi, Tunisian representative, and Sri Lankan representative to this meeting. The President stated that five draught resolutions await decision before the Council: Italy and Japan (S/10451), Poland (UN Doc, S/10453/Rev-1), Syria (UN Doc, S/10456), France and Britain (UN Doc, S/10455), and the Soviet Union (UN Doc, S/10457). The Chinese and Soviet draught resolutions (S/10421) and (S/10428) were not vetoed (UN Doc, S/PV/1616: 3).

After the President's opening remarks, Indian External Affairs Minister Sardar Swaran Singh read out a statement by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. This statement had two key points-

- Emergence of Bangladesh through the surrender of Pakistani troops at Dhaka.
- India's declaration of ceasefire in the Western Front (UN Doc, S/PV/1616:5).
- The 1616th meeting of the Security Council ended at 1.10 pm.

**1617<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Security Council (December 16, 1971)**

The Foreign Minister of India proclaimed the creation of Bangladesh via the surrender of Pakistani soldiers in Dhaka at 3.00 pm in the 1616<sup>th</sup> and 1617<sup>th</sup> Security Council meetings. Besides Security Council members, India, Pakistan, Tunisia, and Saudi Arabia attended this meeting. A Soviet draught resolution (S/10458) welcomed India's ceasefire proposal during this conference. Japan and the US presented a seven-point draught resolution (S/10450) on Geneva Conventions (1949) compliance, including refugee safe return, during the conference. It then proposed S/10459/Rev.1, revising this plan. Meeting terminated at 9.45 pm without Security Council resolution (UN Doc, S/PV/1617).

**1620<sup>th</sup> meeting (Final meeting) of the Security Council (December 21, 1971)**

Despite Bangladesh's ascendancy and India's unilateral ceasefire, the UN Security Council struggled to pass a resolution. On December 21, the Security Council's seven non-permanent member nations - Argentina, Burundi, Italy, Japan, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, and Somalia - tabled a resolution (S/10465). The resolution's principal goal was to "observe a cease-fire and obligate all parties concerned to abide by the Geneva Conventions." When the resolution was presented to a vote in plenary, 13 nations voted in favor of it, with the Soviet Union and Poland abstaining (UN Doc, S/PV/1620).

**Consequences of the provisional 7 state resolution of the Security Council**

<b>In favor of the proposal</b>	<b>Abstain from voting</b>	<b>Against the proposal</b>
United States, China, United Kingdom, France, Argentina, Belgium, Burundi, Italy, Japan, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Syria	Soviet Union, Poland	***

As a result, the Security Council finally passed the ceasefire resolution. The eventful 26th (special) session of the General Assembly was declared closed on the day after the resolution was passed by the Security Council, on 22 December. Thus, Bangladesh gained independence without any effective role of the United Nations.

**Conclusion**

The Bengali liberation war with Pakistani forces in besieged Bangladesh lasted from March 26 to December 16, 1971. The UN did nothing to address genocide and human rights in East Pakistan during the Liberation War. Due to its dependency on the US, the UN could not address East Pakistan's genocide and human rights abuses. The UN's good contribution in alleviating refugees' immediate concerns in India has always been noted. The UN's greatest

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refugee aid effort in Bangladesh occurred in 1971. At the time, the UN did not prioritize political issues in establishing a lasting refugee solution. Major nations preferred geopolitical and national solutions outside the UN. Bangladesh has not been resolved by the UN Security Council and General Assembly.

The US and China had a 'leaning strategy' towards Pakistan and the USSR towards India. The Soviet Union's veto has frequently thwarted China-US Security Council efforts to unify Pakistan and prevent Bangladesh's accession. Pakistan's statehood was supported by 104–11 votes in the UN General Assembly's Bangladesh resolution. The vote supported national integration (United Pakistan) in 1971. However, superpowers like France and Britain remained neutral, helping Bangladesh gain independence. Bangladesh became independent on December 21, 1971, when the Security Council passed an anti-war resolution (S/10465) without UN involvement.

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