Dear Sir/Madam:

As you may know, justice with regards to the atrocities of the events surrounding the independence of Bangladesh in 1971 has been delayed for thirty eight years. Kean University is therefore continuing its efforts to enlighten the public about those responsible for the war crimes and crime against humanity that occurred. Its second annual conference on Bangladesh titled “Bangladesh 1971: Addressing claims of War crimes, Genocide and Crimes against Humanity” will be held on Sunday, October 18, 2009. The conference draws attention to efforts underway in Bangladesh to hold perpetrators responsible for crimes committed in 1971.

The Human Rights Institute at Kean University facilitates and supports endeavors that address human rights violations. It organizes and hosts its Annual Human Rights Conference. The Human Rights Institute publicly recognizes the necessity of addressing the regional conflict resulting in egregious violations of human rights in Bangladesh in 1971 and of the need to do so at an international level. This seminar is the second since 2007 to address the murder of “probably 300,000 and possibly 1 million fellow Muslims and minority Hindus in Bangladesh in 1971” (Ben Kiernan, Blood and Soil, page 572). For more detail please consult the agenda of the seminar that is attached to this letter.

The goal of the conference is to provide evidence of the atrocities of 1971 by presenting eyewitness accounts of victims, family members and freedom fighters. The conference will include panel discussions, question and answer sessions. Key discussants will include international lawyers as well as genocide scholars who will address the crimes committed in a comparative and comprehensive.

Kean University’s conference draws is particularly timely because of the current initiative of the government of Bangladesh to bring perpetrators of the atrocities of 1971 to justice. The ongoing debate in the country as to whether it should be an international or domestic trial deserves our attention.

In order to successfully conduct this event, the assistance of the community is absolutely vital. The Human Rights Institute requests your participation in this event with a donation that will be used solely for the expenses of the event. Kean University considers the conference to be important enough that the President is providing his financial and moral support to this event as well.

The Kean University conference has a fourfold agenda: to record testimony of the persons aggrieved by the incredible events of 1971 in Bangladesh; to bring to trial the perpetrators of the atrocities of 1971 and consider alternative and additional forms of justice including the truth and conciliation of the aggrieved; to develop and institutionalize university courses at Kean and elsewhere on atrocities that analyze the horrendous events of 1971 and compare them with those
in other countries such as Indonesia and Biafra; and engage participants from the public and academic communities around these issues in interdisciplinary annual conferences.

You are invited to join the committee of gracious donors and supporters currently in formation. Please find attached to this letter details on how to make a donation to the conference. Your donations towards the expenses of the conference will be most appreciated. It will go directly to the Kean University Foundation that will provide you with a tax-deductible receipt. Thank you for your consideration.

Yours very truly,

Henry Kaplowitz, Ph.D
Director
Human Rights Institute