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REPORT

Preliminary Analysis of Recent Protests and Unrest in Bangladesh

16 August 2024



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1. Summary

Triggered by the reinstatement of a quota system for allocation of civil service positions, initially peaceful student protests in Bangladesh that started in mid-June 2024 were followed by violence and serious human rights violations committed by security forces. Hundreds of people are believed to have been killed, including at least 32 children, and thousands injured. There are strong indications, warranting further independent investigation, that the security forces used unnecessary and disproportionate force in their response to the situation. Alleged violations included extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detention, enforced disappearances, torture and ill-treatment, and severe restrictions on exercise of freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly.

In a rapid and dramatic series of developments in Bangladesh, following broad-based protests and unrest, the government resigned on 5 August 2024 and was replaced by a civilian Interim Government to oversee a transition to fresh elections.¹ Since that time, thousands of detainees and longer-term political prisoners – including some victims of enforced disappearance - have been released. The Inspector General of Police and head of the paramilitary Rapid Action Battalion have been replaced, although more comprehensive vetting of the security forces will be needed. However, reports of looting, arson and attacks on members of religious minorities, and reprisals against members of the former ruling party Awami League and police, raise serious concerns.

The transition ahead presents an historic opportunity to restore democratic order and rule of law in Bangladesh, reform and revitalize the country's institutions, and strengthen the protection of human rights. A critical task will be to conduct comprehensive, impartial and transparent investigation into all alleged human rights violations and other acts of violence since July, to ensure redress to victims and accountability for those responsible and to identify measures that would prevent recurrence. The Chief Advisor of the Interim Government, H.E. Dr. Muhammad Yunus, as well as the Chief of Army Staff, have made important public commitments to investigate all unlawful deaths. In a press statement on 4 August 2024, the High Commissioner for Human Rights recommended that, in the circumstances and to ensure public confidence, such an investigation should be conducted independently and offered the support of his Office.

This report, prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, provides a preliminary overview of key human rights violations and concerns observed in connection with recent events in Bangladesh. It compiles data from multiple open sources and other remotely accessible reliable sources to provide a preliminary overview of the human rights concerns that arose during the recent protests and the state's response from July until 6 August 2024. The information contained in this report is not comprehensive due to significant restrictions on internet access and disruption to communication channels during this period. In a letter to the former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on 23 July 2024, the High Commissioner for Human Rights raised concerns about serious allegations of human rights violations and proposed deploying an OHCHR fact-finding team to Bangladesh. The former Minister of Foreign Affairs, in a response dated 30 July 2024, did not refer to this offer. An earlier version of this report was shared with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for factual comment on 2 August 2024. While, in the circumstances, it has not been able to formally respond, it has provided subsequent updates on major developments in Bangladesh.

The report makes a number of recommendations for the Interim Government to ensure accountability for those responsible for human rights violations, in line with Bangladesh's international human rights obligations, and the right of victims to effective remedies. It also makes recommendations to the international community. These recommendations are designed to de-escalate tensions, prevent recurrence through security sector and other priority reforms, and ensure a democratic, peaceful and inclusive transition in line with human rights principles.

¹ The Interim Government was appointed by the President and sworn in on 8 August 2024. On 9 August, the country's Supreme Court gave an advisory opinion that, in the current circumstances of urgency, constitutional vacuum, and need to operate the executive functions of the state, the President had the power to appoint an Interim Government.

2. Background

The student protests in Bangladesh, which began in mid-June 2024, were sparked by a decision of the High Court to reinstate a quota system reserving a full 30 percent of government jobs for descendants of veterans of Bangladesh's war of independence, often termed a liberation war. These are an important constituency for the Awami League, ruling party at the time. The quota system was previously abolished in October 2018 after massive protests, but this was challenged in 2024 by seven descendants of combatants in the war. The High Court's decision led to widespread dissatisfaction among students and young professionals, who viewed the quota as discriminatory and favoring certain political elites. Amid political tension and economic dissatisfaction, the "Students Against Discrimination" movement, as students started calling it, quickly gained momentum, with thousands of students from various educational institutions joining the nationwide protests. In response to the escalating situation, the Government filed an appeal with the Supreme Court to review the High Court's ruling.

The protests also reflected deeper economic frustrations among young people in Bangladesh. With high unemployment rates and underemployment, many graduates feel disillusioned by the lack of opportunities. According to a 2023 report by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the youth unemployment rate in Bangladesh was 12.3 percent, more than three times higher than the overall unemployment rate.

The protests are further situated in a broader context in which democratic and civic space has become increasingly restricted in Bangladesh, with the Awami League dominating state institutions, undermining the independence of the judiciary and curtailing freedom of expression through restrictive laws, including on social media, and a history of political parties engaging in violence and property destruction targeting their opponents.

Although the demonstrations began as a mainly peaceful movement at universities, they descended into violence in mid-July, particularly following senior Government officials' inflammatory remarks referring to the protesters as "*razakars*," a deeply derogatory term historically associated with real and perceived collaborators of Pakistani actors during the 1971 war of independence. Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader personally made incendiary statements, blaming what he called "*anti-liberation*" forces such as the opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh (JI), and ominously asserting that the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student wing of the ruling party, would respond to the protesters. This further inflamed tensions, leading to violent clashes between Government supporters and protestors.

Violence further escalated on 15 July when members of the BCL attacked student protesters, particularly at Dhaka University and Dhaka Medical College Hospital, injuring many protestors. Armed with rods, sticks, and clubs, and with some brandishing firearms such as revolvers, these attacks were reportedly not prevented by the police, nor publicly discouraged by the Government. The situation worsened on 16 July when a student leader, Abu Sayed, while not posing any visible threat, was shot dead by police in Rangpur. Images of this killing circulated widely on social media, further igniting anger and calls for nationwide protests.

The Government's response to the protests included deploying paramilitary units such as the Border Guard Bangladesh and the Rapid Action Battalion, both of which have records of serious human rights violations, including enforced disappearances and torture and ill-treatment, setting the stage for further escalation. On 16 July, the Government ordered schools and universities across the country indefinitely closed.

In a press conference held on 17 July, the Prime Minister announced that all incidents of death and violence would be duly investigated for appropriate legal action against those responsible. The Government decided to establish a judicial probe committee led by a High Court justice to inquire into the "deaths of six persons on 16 July 2024", and related "violence, arson, looting, and terrorist activities".

Reports of widespread destruction of public and private property began to emerge. According to a Government letter to the High Commissioner dated 30 July, 235 police facilities were damaged, with 69 outposts destroyed. Hundreds of other public facilities, including metro rail stations and express highways, were also damaged. On

18 July, the headquarters of state-run Bangladesh Television in Dhaka was set on fire, along with several of the broadcaster's vehicles, when riot police retreated inside the premises.

The protests soon spread beyond the student community. By 18 July, the movement had garnered support from several political parties, including the main opposition party BNP, trade unions, and other groups, transforming it into a broader set of demands for better educational opportunities, economic justice, and democratic governance. The Government claimed that the movement had been "*infiltrated and diverted by anti-liberation forces and certain political factions*", including BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami "*resulting in widespread violence and terror throughout the country.*" These claims led to a further escalation of violence and anger.

On 18 July 2024, the Government imposed a nationwide shut down of broadband and mobile Internet, preventing access to websites, social media and web-based mobile phone communications. This measure drastically restricted news coverage and access to information. Mobile phone communication was also disrupted, effectively cutting off the country from the outside world. The Government claimed this was the result of serious damage to the National Data Center.

On 19 July, a group of protesters stormed a jail in the central Bangladeshi district of Narsingdi and freed over 850 inmates, before setting the facility on fire. That day, the Dhaka Metropolitan Police imposed a ban on all rallies and processions within the capital. Later that night, the Prime Minister called an emergency meeting and announced a country-wide curfew under the Special Powers Act of 1974, effective from 20 July. This curfew, which included intermittent relaxations, aimed to restore order, but severely restricted the movement of people and the exercise of other rights and freedoms.

On 22 July, the Supreme Court decided that the quota system should be re-apportioned with 93 percent for "*merit*", 5 percent for freedom fighters, martyred freedom fighters, *birangona* (survivors of sexual violence in 1971) or their children, 1 percent for "disabled/differently abled/third gender", and 1 percent for indigenous people. The Government accepted the Court's view and publicly notified the change. However, by then, the demands of the protesters had broadened. The students themselves issued a nine-point list of demands, including a public apology from the Prime Minister for the mass killings of students, as well as the resignations of Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader, Education Minister Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury Nowfel, and Law Minister Anisul Haque, an inquiry into the unnecessary and disproportionate use of force, and the release of all arrested students.

Despite partial restoration of internet and mobile services starting from 24 July, the situation remained tense. Reports of arbitrary arrests and detentions, enforced disappearances, and torture and ill-treatment began to surface. There were also reports of violence, abuse, and sexual harassment against women student protesters. Furthermore, one-third of the security forces personnel from the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, near the border with Myanmar, were reassigned to respond to the protests, creating a security vacuum there and leading to increased security incidents in the camps.

On 30 July, the Prime Minister and the Law Minister said the judicial probe announced on 17 July would include two more judges, and be broadened in scope. However, no new names were announced. Regarding the scope of the judicial inquiry, the Law Minister announced it would cover the deaths which occurred "between 16 July 2024 and 21 July 2024".

On 31 July, authorities banned the opposition Jamaat-e-Islami party and its student wing for their alleged roles in violence during the protests. Protests resumed on 1 and 2 August, with demands for the release of detainees and justice for those allegedly killed by law enforcement agencies, resulting in one death and numerous injuries. On 3 August, student leaders called for nationwide civil disobedience until the Prime Minister's resignation, leading to widespread clashes. On 4 August, 98 people, including 13 policemen, were killed in clashes between protesters, pro-government groups and police in multiple districts. The ruling Awami League and its affiliates also clashed with protesters. During the violence, many police were seen siding with the Awami League and their supporters, while the army was regarded as remaining neutral.

The Prime Minister urged citizens to curb what she described as “anarchists” and declared an indefinite nationwide curfew starting on 4 August, along with a three-day general holiday to ease tensions. In defiance, the “Students Against discrimination” movement organized a “March to Dhaka” to demand her resignation. Authorities shut off mobile internet on 4 August with a brief broadband blackout on 5 August. Thousands protested across the country, while police tried to disperse them using sound grenades and tear gas.

On 5 August, clashes occurred as thousands tried to reach Shaheed Minar, a national monument in Dhaka, resulting in at least six deaths. As protests intensified, Prime Minister Hasina left the country. The Bangladesh Army Chief announced her resignation and intention to form an Interim Government. Student leaders demanded a civilian government be appointed in consultation with them.

Protesters stormed the Prime Minister’s residence, vandalized the Chief Justice’s house, set fire to the Awami League party office, and destroyed the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum and statue of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. On the night of 5 August, there were scenes of both jubilation and revenge, with over a hundred persons likely killed in retaliatory attacks, primarily targeting police and Awami League leaders. Property owned by Awami League leaders, along with a number of police stations, were vandalized and torched in several places.

Following the government’s resignation, the law and order situation remained unstable across the country, with law enforcement officials retreating from sight in many places, for fear of retaliation.

There have also been reports of attacks against minorities, including Hindus, especially in the days immediately after the change of government. On 5 and 6 August, Hindu houses and properties were reportedly attacked, vandalized and looted in 27 districts. A number of places of worship were also damaged, including an ISKCON temple in Meherpur, Khulna division, which was vandalised and set on fire. In response to the violence, various student organisations and other ordinary people have been reportedly forming groups to protect minorities and maintain vigilance over religious sites belonging to minority communities. The Chief Advisor to the Interim Government, Dr. Yunus, condemned the attacks on minority communities in the country as “heinous”. The Religious Affairs Adviser to the Interim Government, AFM Khalid Hossain, highlighted that a list of places of worship and other properties which had been damaged had been compiled and a hotline had been established to report on attacks on minorities.

As noted, most police stations across the country ceased operating after the fall of the previous government on 5 August and the reported attacks on them that ensued. However, as of 11 August, 599 police stations out of 639 had resumed operations across the country. Of these, 97 police stations out of 110 were functional in metropolitan cities, while 502 out of 529 police stations were functioning in the districts.

3. Human Rights Concerns

a. Unnecessary and Disproportionate Use of Force and Extrajudicial Killings

There are serious and credible allegations that the security forces responded overall to both protests and subsequent violence with unnecessary and disproportionate force. The police and paramilitary forces appear to have frequently used force indiscriminately against both peaceful protests as well as those with elements of violence, employing rubber bullets, sound grenades and firearms with live lethal ammunition, including birdshot pellets and bullets. Considering that certain individuals among the protesters were seen typically using sticks, bricks or similar types of makeshift weapons, the security forces recurring and persistent use of firearms, including pellet shotguns, handguns and rifles, would have regularly involved unnecessary and disproportionate force. Reports indicate that security forces also used helicopters to fire on protesters, further intensifying the violence. In some cases, the security forces were reported to have employed vehicles and helicopters that bore the logo of the United Nations and appeared intended for use by Bangladeshi contingents in United Nations peacekeeping missions.

According to available public reports by media and the protest movement itself, between 16 July and 11 August, more than 600 people were killed. Of these, nearly 400 deaths were reported from 16 July to 4 August, while

around 250 people were reportedly killed following the new wave of protests between 5 and 6 August. The number of reported killings in revenge attacks since that time still remains to be determined. A number of deaths were reported between 7 and 11 August, including those who died while undergoing medical treatment for injuries sustained in the violence. Those killed include protesters, bystanders, journalists covering the events and a number of members of the security force. Thousands of protesters and bystanders have been injured, with hospitals overwhelmed by the influx of patients. The reported death toll is likely an underestimate, as information collection has been hindered by restrictions on movement due to the curfew and the internet shutdown. Furthermore, hospitals were reportedly prevented by State authorities from providing details of those killed and injured.

The majority of deaths and injuries have been attributed to the security forces and the student wing affiliated with the Awami League. These casualties resulted from the use of live ammunition and other force against protesters who while acting violently reportedly were not armed, or only lightly armed, as well as from instances of security forces unlawfully using lethal force against protesters posing no apparent threat, unarmed protesters, and bystanders, including at least 4 journalists and at least 32 children, with many more injured and detained - a number of whom were seemingly deliberately targeted.

During the protests some videos started to circulate on social media that appeared to show security forces deliberately using live ammunition against protestors. In one such video, apparently showing the killing of a student activist named Abu Sayed Sayed (mentioned above), the student can be seen standing still with his arms spread wide and holding a wooden stick in a gesture of defiance. The police can then be seen shooting directly at his chest. Upon impact, Abu Sayed clutched his chest as the officers fired at least twice more. In another video, a young man is seen trying to pull an injured young man to safety in the Jatrabari area of Dhaka. Shortly after, a plain-clothes officer wearing a helmet appears to open fire towards them forcing the young man to flee, leaving the mortally wounded man behind.

The unnecessary and disproportionate use of force by law enforcement agencies against protesters would constitute a violation of Bangladesh's obligations to uphold the rights to life and physical integrity and with relevant international human rights standards, as further specified by the United Nations Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials. These Principles set out that law enforcement may only use firearms in self-defence or defence of others against individuals representing an imminent threat of death or serious injury, and only if no less extreme means are sufficient. The authorities also have an obligation to urgently provide necessary medical care to anyone injured by the security forces.

Furthermore, authorities have an obligation to promptly initiate independent, impartial and effective investigations into the alleged human rights violations, hold those responsible to account, and ensure effective remedies for the victims.

b. Arrests and Allegations of Torture and Ill-Treatment

As the protests temporarily paused on 22 July and the first internet shutdown was gradually lifted, reports began to emerge of targeted actions against BNP and JI leaders, activists, student leaders, and other individuals. These actions included intensified surveillance, threats, and legal measures. Thousands of arrests were reported in Dhaka and other parts of the country, involving joint operations by the Rapid Action Battalion, police, and army. Checkpoints were established, and phones were reportedly being checked to remove evidence of police violence.

The majority of those arrested were not presented in court within 24 hours, and were denied access to legal representation, while no information of their whereabouts was provided to their families. On 21 July, a circular was reportedly issued by the Home Ministry, instructing that prisons should not permit any visits to prisoners. This directive effectively rendered "incommunicado" all students and others detained. From 12 July to 3 August, at least 450,000 unknown persons and 2000 identified persons were reportedly registered for offenses in at least 286 criminal cases in Dhaka alone, including a combination of named and unnamed individuals—many members of the opposition reportedly among them. In Bangladesh, hundreds of individuals are often included as "unnamed" in a "First Information Report", increasing the risk of widespread arbitrary arrest and detention.

Reports received by OHCHR confirmed that block raids were conducted in various locations of Dhaka city and near other university and college campuses. During these operations, large numbers of law enforcement personnel surrounded the area in question, prevented anyone from leaving, and conducted house searches based on intelligence information and, in several cases, without presenting judicial search warrants. Law enforcement agencies claimed that they were arresting individuals involved in violence and property destruction, based on analysis of their social media activity.

Reports indicate that a number of those arrested were subjected to ill-treatment and even torture while in police custody. The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), which Bangladesh has ratified, prohibits torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment under any circumstances.

Gono Odhikar Parishad party leader Nurul Haque was presented in court after being held for five days of questioning under remand. Accused of vandalism and arson at Shetu Bhaban, Nurul reportedly endured torture during remand, as confirmed by his wife. Footage showed him being brought to court barefoot, unable to stand, and in excruciating pain. Nurul was granted bail on 6 August and released. Nahid Islam, a coordinator of the quota reform movement, went missing on 19 July. His father reported that he was taken from a friend's house at midnight and reappeared over 24 hours later. CCTV footage suggests he was picked up by the Rapid Action Battalion. Nahid described being interrogated and tortured by individuals claiming to be detectives. He received hospital treatment for blood clots on both shoulders and his left leg. Nahid, along with two coordinators of the movement, Asif Mahmud and Abu Bakar Majumdar, were forcibly taken by unidentified plainclothes men on 26 July, while receiving treatment at Gonoshastho Hospital in Dhaka. Three more persons were also taken the following day. The Detective Branch claimed that they would take them into custody for their own safety, a claim rejected by their own families. Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan stated that the coordinators had not been officially arrested and they would be released if deemed safe by the police. The six coordinators were reportedly forced to issue a video statement announcing the end of the protest movement. They were released on 1 August.

Following the Government's resignation, 2,400 of those arrested were released on bail but the number of persons still in detention or unaccounted for needs to be clarified. The widespread arrests without due process constitute a violation of Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which guarantees the right to liberty and security of person. Bangladeshi activists abroad were also reportedly targeted by threats.

c. Restrictions on Freedom of Expression - Internet Shutdown

Restrictions on communication, including the imposition of an Internet shutdown between 18 July and 23 July and again on 4 and 5 August by the Government, severely impacted the rights to freedom of expression, and to peaceful assembly, as well as other fundamental rights, including economic, social and cultural rights. The Government had contended that the internet shutdown was due to the destruction of key infrastructure by protesters. However, information collected by OHCHR indicates that the Government deliberately restricted internet services – including access to social media – to curb the dissemination of information and hinder the coordination of protest activities. Internet shutdowns can reduce the degree of public scrutiny and knowledge of conduct of law enforcement agencies, and so risk heightening impunity for their actions.

The near-total internet shutdown included restricting access to social media platforms, which significantly impeded the flow of information about the protests. Platforms like Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and Instagram have been instrumental in organizing protests, sharing real-time updates, and garnering national and international support. However, the Government's internet shutdown significantly impeded these efforts. While a number of Government-run outlets continued to operate, the online editions of major newspapers ceased to function. The countrywide curfew and internet shutdown exacerbated the crisis by limiting freedom of movement and expression, including access to information, as well as the space for peaceful dialogue. There were also disturbing reports of journalists being threatened by authorities for their news reporting.

Under Article 19 of the ICCPR, everyone has the right to freedom of expression, including the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds. Restrictions on this right must be provided by law and be

necessary for respecting the rights or reputations of others or for protecting national security, public order, public health, or morals, and be proportionate to those ends. Blunt measures, such as a blanket deliberate Internet shut-down for a prolonged period, do not meet such requirements and contravene Bangladesh's international human rights law obligations.

d. Restrictions on Freedom of Movement and Resulting Broader Impacts

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, Article 13) and the ICCPR (Article 12) guarantee the right to freedom of movement, which is also linked to enjoyment of a host of other civil and political, and social, economic and cultural rights. The far-reaching restrictions on movement imposed by the prolonged countrywide curfew, coupled with the restrictions on communications, as well as the measures taken to enforce them, disproportionately restricted freedom of movement and critically impacted other fundamental rights, highlighting the urgent need for measures to restore rule of law normalcy and ensure respect for human rights.

The restrictions on freedom of movement also significantly exacerbated disruptions to daily life, commerce, and access to essential services. Hospitals continue to be overwhelmed, and many injured protesters were unable to receive timely medical care. The economic impact has also been significant, with businesses and transport severely affected by the unrest. The curfews and shutdowns not only hindered the emergency response but also strained the supply chain for essential goods and services, exacerbating the already dire economic situation. The closure of schools and universities also severely impacted the right to education, and affected children's wellbeing more generally.

The overall impact of the unrest has been profound. According to local NGOs, many families have been displaced due to the violence, with reports of homes raided and people forced to flee. The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society has been actively involved in providing medical aid and relief to those affected.

4. Recommendations

The following interim recommendations are made in order to address the present situation in the country that has resulted from the demonstrations and events detailed in this report. However, long-term comprehensive legal and institutional reforms will be needed.

To all political actors:

- **Prioritize de-escalation and prevent any further loss of life or injury;**
- **Refrain from reprisals against political opponents of all viewpoints;**
- **Uphold the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly;**
- **Ensure protection of minority communities and refrain from any language or acts of incitement to hatred, discrimination or violence;**
- **Actively denounce any human rights violations or abuses, in particular, those committed by their own members or supporters, and advocate for measures to ensure accountability and prevent further violations and abuses;**
- **Ensure the transition is conducted in a transparent and accountable way that is inclusive and open to the meaningful participation of all Bangladeshis.**

To the Interim Government:

- **Take steps to restore democratic order and rule of law through an inclusive and participatory process guided by human rights;**
- **Develop a systematic approach to vetting for any appointments to and dismissals from the judiciary, security sector and other institutions;**
- **Provide law enforcement agencies with clear instructions limiting the use of force, and especially firearms, in line with international human rights standards, ceasing any use of pellet guns, and, when use of force is absolutely necessary and proportionate, prioritising instead restrained use of**

less-lethal weapons; emphasize a de-escalation approach to all public order management. Refrain from deploying Border Guards and Rapid Action Battalions to any protest or other public order management tasks and initiate a comprehensive review of these forces, their functions, command, control and accountability mechanisms and operational doctrines;;

- Ensure that injured protesters, security forces, and bystanders promptly receive all necessary medical care. Facilitate unhindered access to medical treatment and support for all affected individuals;
- Facilitate peaceful protests without discrimination, while protecting public and private property from unlawful violence;
- Instruct law enforcement agencies and other government forces to protect populations at risk against any retaliatory or revenge violence, including minority communities, and diligently investigate any cases and prosecute identified perpetrators. Publish the number of arrests, and related charges in relation to the protests or any revenge violence and immediately inform and provide access to the families and legal counsel of those detained. Immediately release those arbitrarily detained and ensure all others are promptly brought before a court and afforded bail where possible. Ensure due process and legal representation for all detainees;
- Establish a comprehensive independent, impartial, and transparent investigation in line with international human rights standards into all recent cases involving serious injuries, deaths, or the use of firearms by security forces or other violent actors that can hold those responsible accountable. Ensure accountability for those who used or ordered the unnecessary and disproportionate use of force and provide reparation and effective remedies to victims;
- Protect all related evidence, including CCTV footage and other recordings, to ensure accountability and support for future investigations. Safeguard evidence to prevent tampering, damage or loss and take appropriate disciplinary and criminal action against anyone involved in such deleterious action;
- Consider establishing broader truth and accountability measures beyond investigation of the most recent events, with the assistance of international human rights mechanisms;
- Facilitate open dialogue to address social, economic, and political grievances, aiming for lasting solutions that serve the interests of all people in Bangladesh. Promote inclusive dialogue to enhance a participatory approach to decision-making;
- Allow media to operate freely and safely without intimidation or reprisals. Ensure access to information and freedom of the press;
- Guarantee non-recurrence by preventing further unnecessary and disproportionate use of force, arbitrary arrests, and enforced disappearances. Suspend security officials involved, including at the command level, pending a full, independent, and impartial investigation.

To the international community:

- Support Bangladesh to ensure a transition in which human rights are fundamental;
- Support fact-finding and accountability efforts to ensure remedy for victims and broader institutional and security sector reforms;
- Support OHCHR in providing assistance to the Interim Government for the protection of human rights through the transition period.