

ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO BANGLADESH

CZECH REPUBLIC

- Does the government of Bangladesh intend to accede to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment?
- What human rights training is provided to law enforcement and judicial officers with regard to protection of human rights of women, children and persons of minority sexual orientation or gender identity? How is ensured protection of persons, in particular of persons of minority sexual orientation or gender identity, in detention against abuse and violence?
- Has the government of Bangladesh considered issuing a standing invitation to the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council?
- There are some Special Procedures' requests for a visit that have not yet been agreed on. Could you elaborate on whether and in what time frame will these special procedures be allowed to visit the country?

LATVIA

- According to the information by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 63 countries from different regions of the world have issued standing invitations to all special procedures of the Human Rights Council. Considering previous cooperation of Bangladesh with special procedures mandate holders (Special Rapporteur on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief (15–24 May 2000), Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences (28 October – 15 November 2000), Special Rapporteur on the right to food (23 October – 4 November 2002)) and despite the pending requests by several Special Rapporteurs to visit Bangladesh - would your country consider extending a standing invitation to all special procedures of the Human Rights Council in the future?

LIECHTENSTEIN

- In 2000 the Special Rapporteur on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief recommended that Bangladesh revise its primary-school textbooks and curricula, in order to ensure that the religious and ethnic diversity of Bangladesh are reflected in such a way that each religion is presented in an objective manner, and in order to promote the values of tolerance and non-discrimination. How did Bangladesh follow-up on this recommendation?
- In 2004 the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), while welcoming the measures taken to increase the number of

women in the National Parliament, expressed concern that the number of women in decision-making positions remains low in politics, the judiciary, the civil service and the foreign service. What measures have been taken to address this concern?

NETHERLANDS

- How will the government address the ‘culture of impunity’ for human rights violations, such as extra judicial killings and death and torture in custody, by law enforcement agencies and harassment and repression of human rights defenders, including journalists and representatives of religious or ethnical minorities?
- Watchdog organisations, such as the National Human Rights Commission and the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), are vital to ensure that human rights are upheld.
- What steps will the government take to strengthen these institutions to ensure that they will be able to operate independently and effectively?
- How does the government intend to address the problem of prison conditions including overcrowding?
- How does the government intend to take effective measures to tackle violence against women and girls?
- What is the government intending to do to eradicate child labour? For example what steps will be taken to finalize the National Child Labour Policy and to fully implement the plan of action to eliminate the worst forms of child labour (Time Bound Programme).

SWEDEN

- Numerous reports point to the persistence of discriminatory attitudes towards women and girls in Bangladesh. Bangladeshi women face discrimination both in public and private spheres, and despite the progress achieved by the Prevention of Women and Children Repression Act (2000), the Acid Crime Control Act (2002) and related acts, violence continues to be a significant feature of the everyday experience of many Bangladeshi women. Does the Government intend to adopt a uniform Family Code that fully complies with international human rights standards, or take other effective measures to remedy the current, unequal status of Bangladeshi women within the family, particularly in matters related to marriage, divorce, custody, alimony and property inheritance? Does the government intend to take any further measures to comprehensively address the issue of violence against women and girls, including fatwa-instigated violence? Does the government intend to rescind its current reservations to article 2 (regarding Islamic laws) and article 16-1-c (equal rights of women in marriage and family) of CEDAW?

- Efforts undertaken by the “care-taker government” to tackle impunity and corruption and to establish key institutions constitute important and welcome steps, and have contributed to the current downward trend in extra-judicial killings and torture. Reports of human rights violations committed by law enforcement agencies, such as the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), nevertheless continue to give cause for concern. It will require much effort to end the atmosphere of impunity and to ensure that the law is imposed in accordance with international human rights standards. Could the government elaborate on how it intends to combat impunity with regard to the human rights violations, including extrajudicial killings and torture, allegedly perpetrated by its law enforcement agencies, and bring those responsible for such abuses to justice? What measures will the government take to protect human right defenders, including journalists, from harassment and abuses by law enforcement officers?
- In its resolutions 62/149 of 18 December 2007 and 63/168 of 18 December 2008, the General Assembly called on states to establish a moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty, and to respect international standards that provide safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty. There are a large number of offences on the Statute book which carry the death penalty in Bangladesh. Does the government have any plans to abolish the death penalty, or as a first step, issue a moratorium?

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

- Does Bangladesh plan to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture? Can you tell us if you plan to issue a standing invitation to Special Rapporteurs, including the Rapporteur on Extrajudicial Executions and Torture?
- What steps are you taking to ensure the independence of key institutions, including the Anti-Corruption Commission and the newly-formed National Human Rights Commission. How will you ensure that the NHRC operates in compliance with the Paris Principles?
- What measures will you take to ensure that women’s rights are protected? Are existing laws e.g. Prevention of Women and Children Repression Act, Acid Control Act fully implemented? Do you plan to lift reservations to articles 2 & 16.1(c) of CEDAW?
- How do you plan to address structural problems with the judicial and prisons system, including overcrowding, difficulties faced by many in accessing bail and children in prison as well as access to lawyers and families?
- What are your plans to eradicate child labour in the informal labour sector in Bangladesh?

- How do you plan to ensure that the rights of persons belonging to minority communities are respected? Will you implement the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord?
- To what extent has civil society been involved in the preparation of the state's national report.
