



36th Regular Session of the UN Human Rights Council
Item 3 General Debate: Oral Statement Delivered by Samia Islam on behalf of
Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA) and
World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)
Monday, 18 September 2017

Mr. President,

We note observations by the Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID) on Bangladesh and welcome its February 2017 call to end enforced disappearances in the country. Bangladesh has failed to respond to these calls and we remain deeply concerned by the increasing numbers of enforced disappearances in the country.

Between 2009 and August 2017, law enforcement agencies including the Rapid Action Battalion and the Detective Branch of Police have allegedly been involved in 393 cases of disappearances – most of which involve political opponents and dissidents. Many more cases remain unreported due to fear of harassment and intimidation by state agencies. The police routinely refuse to register complaints involving allegations of enforced disappearances against colleagues. Several disappeared victims have been found in detention centres after law enforcement agencies denied allegations of their abduction. Victims of disappearances do not have access to appropriate legal remedies due to serious challenges in the country's judicial system.

As Bangladesh heads towards elections next year, it is feared that the numbers of those disappeared may increase. We call on the Council to pay close attention to enforced disappearances in Bangladesh and urge the government to take action and put an end enforced disappearances. We further call on the government of Bangladesh to fully cooperate with UN human rights mechanisms and accept the pending visit request from WGEID and provide it with unhindered access.

Thank You