

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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## **Amnesty International urges Bangladesh to respect fundamental freedoms**

### ***Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcome on Bangladesh***

Since August 2017, Bangladesh has led an exemplary effort to welcome the Rohingya refugees when other borders were being closed to them. However, in sharp contrast, the recent brutal crackdown on student protests by the authorities has resulted in the injury to at least 115 student protesters, and the arrest of photo journalist Shahidul Alam. A prisoner of conscience and a possible victim of torture, he has been charged under the draconian Information and Communication Technology Act merely for having peacefully exercised his right to freedom of expression. Amnesty International calls for his immediate and unconditional release.

Amnesty International welcomes Bangladesh's acceptance of a number of key recommendations made to it by other states during the review, such as bringing its domestic law into conformity with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including by repealing restrictive provisions limiting the right to freedom of expression.<sup>1</sup> Bangladesh must act swiftly on the commitments it made during its UPR, including by amending the Information and Communication Technology Act in line the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

### **Background**

The UN Human Rights Council adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Bangladesh on 20 September 2018 during its 39<sup>th</sup> session. On that occasion Amnesty International delivered this oral statement.

Amnesty International also contributed to the information basis of the review through its submission on country: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/7919/2017/en/>

### **Public Document**

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Bangladesh, A/HRC/39/12, recommendations 147.7, 147.68, 147.69, 147.70, 147.71, 147.73, 147.74, 147.77, 147.78, 147.80, 147.89.