

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## Public Statement

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### **Bangladesh: Handover to caretaker government marked by violence**

Amnesty International strongly condemns the wave of violence that has engulfed Bangladesh over the past five days and calls urgently on the leaders of all political parties unequivocally to condemn this violence and to take immediate and effective measures to ensure that no further violence is committed by their party members in the run up to the general elections.

Investigations into recent acts of killing, arson, ransacking of homes, shops and offices as well as targeted political violence must be conducted impartially and without delay. These reported incidents of violence that have claimed dozens of lives and instilled a sense of fear in the public strongly demonstrate the need for human rights to be the cornerstone for political programmes. All political parties must promptly address every report of involvement of their members in these acts of violence and cooperate fully with measures to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice.

In a recent public briefing to all political parties, Amnesty International outlined the crucial role that political parties can play in ensuring that ongoing human rights violations in the country are ended. A key recommendation made was that all political parties must take responsibility for preventing their members from committing human rights abuses and must seek to bring to justice anyone involved in abusing human rights, regardless of their party affiliation.

The right to freedom of expression and assembly is protected under international human rights law. Amnesty International calls on leaders of political parties to ensure that these fundamental rights are respected at all times and that all political gatherings, campaigning or expressions of dissent in the run up to the elections are peaceful.