



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

### Fifty-first session

12 September–7 October 2022

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

### **Written statement\* submitted by Platform for Youth Integration and Volunteerism, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[18 August 2022]

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\* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



## **Truth, Justice and Journalists in Bangladesh**

The United Nations' 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference, and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media, but current situation of journalists and HRDs in Bangladesh is very disappointing.

On the 10th anniversary of the murder of prominent journalists named Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi, my organization expressed its deep concern at the failure of the Bangladeshi authorities to complete an investigation and bring the perpetrators to justice. A decade after the killing of the two journalists, there is still no justice for their families as a result of an appalling and pervasive culture of impunity in Bangladesh. Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi were stabbed to death in their home in Dhaka city in front of their 5-year-old son on 12 February 2012 by Rapid Action Battalion of Bangladesh. It is widely believed that the couple was targeted because of their investigative reporting on corruption in Bangladeshi government and military involvement in civilian killing which they were about to publish.

At least 15 journalists have been killed in Bangladesh in the past decade. Many International human rights organizations have received numerous reports of journalists, human rights defenders, and members of civil society organisations being arbitrarily detained, attacked, abducted, threatened online and offline, and subjected to judicial harassment even in 2022. The incidents appear to be rarely investigated or prosecuted. In many cases, local authorities and RAB are thought to be directly implicated in the attacks. No response was ever received from the government to a letter sent by UN experts following the murder of Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi in 2012. My organization is also concerned that the trial for the fatal shooting of journalist and human rights defender Abdul Hakim Shimul in February 2017, allegedly by the government of Bangladesh, has been repeatedly delayed till to date. Currently, it has been placed on a stay order by the High Court, with all the accused on bail. We urge this council to ask Bangladeshi government to conduct and complete prompt, thorough, independent and effective investigations and bring perpetrators to justice for the murder of Journalist Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi and killings of others journalists and human rights defenders in Bangladesh.

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