The Honourable António Guterres  
Secretary General  
Unite Nations  
UN Office at Geneva  
Palais des Nations  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland  

Dear Secretary General:

We are writing to draw your kind attention to the sad fact that, the religious & ethnic minority Hindus, Buddhists & Christians of Bangladesh including the indigenous peoples are being systematically wiped out not only on the government’s watch but with government complicity. Yet, while the major donor nations are providing tens of millions of Dollars to Bangladesh in unconditional aids the United Nations has kept employing Bangladeshi army and police officers in increasingly greater numbers without ever requiring Bangladesh government and its army to end minority persecution as a precondition to getting these highly coveted U. N. employment.

Whereas the religious & ethnic minorities of Bangladesh represented nearly 20% of the total population when the country was born in 1971, today they represent less than 10%; and, on based on a statistical analysis of the current trend of exodus under duress (and, of course forcible conversion to Islam) there will be no religious & ethnic minorities left in Bangladesh in the next 25 years, that is the Islamists working with complete impunity eliminate the remaining 19 million of them, unless the United Nations and the rest of the community of civilized nations intervene in some fashion.

The situation has reached such a dire state due to the following two reasons:

(1) Bangladesh’s two major political parties’ policy of forging strategic partnerships with the Islamists in order to secure and/or remain in power, and its natural consequence—appeasement; and

(2) Successive government’s consistent policy of not prosecuting and punishing the perpetrators of crimes against the religious & ethnic minorities of the country, in other words granting the minority persecutors complete impunity.

(3) Viewing the non-Muslims or religious & ethnic minorities as “infidels” and thus as an expendable commodity.

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The Islamists of Bangladesh, who include three dozen plus fundamentalist and extremist or terrorist groups, have relentlessly persecuted the country’s religious and ethnic minority Hindus, Buddhists, and Christians, the indigenous peoples, and the mystics known as the ‘Bauls for decades, which has astronomically escalated in recent times.’ By conducting daily persecution and repeated atrocities and massacres they have driven out tens of millions of minorities with the goal of transforming the country into a monolithic Islamic state to be governed by sharia laws.

The Islamists’ declared goal states that “Only the establishment of a Caliphate can change the lot of the nation” (The Daily Star, April 7, 2013). Like ISIS (or ISIL), the Islamists of Bangladesh do not believe in secular democracy; they believe in Majlis-ash-Shura. They do not believe in the harmonious coexistence and equal rights of all religious groups. They do not believe women are equal partners of men. Rather, they regard women as property. They have publicly claimed that women are objects of gratification of man’s libidinous desire, and stated that those women in the workforce are committing zina (adultery). The Islamists blame the rape victims for being raped, and condone the rapists – they have recently said, “If you don’t have multiple witnesses, there is no point bringing charges against a rapist.” They do not consider the non-Muslims any better than animals and treat them as an expendable commodity.

The original constitution of Bangladesh (1972) called for secularism and banned the use of religion in politics. However, Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) promoted Islamism in the country by reinstated Jamaat-e-Islami in national politics. Jamaat-e-Islami has refused to recognize the constitution and the people as the supreme source of power, and in the undisputed power of the elected officials to make laws, consequently relinquishing their status as a political party. By taking advantage of successive government’s policy of appeasement and the Western democratic nation’s lenient view of them driven by the philosophy or hope that they would renounce terror and participate in the democratic process, they have built an economy of their own, and by establishing close ties with the global network of Islamic terrorists, gained enormous strength. The Islamists are not interested in democracy; their goal is to topple the government through an Islamic revolution. As a matter of fact, in May 2013, when bringing half a million madrassa students and teachers to the capital city of Dhaka, they occupied a large square, they featured such speakers as Maulana Habibur Rahman, who was in Afghanistan and met with Bin Laden, said in his speech during the siege, “Only the establishment of a Caliphate can change the lot of the nation” (The Daily Star, April 7, 2013). The world recently witnessed in Al-Baghdadi’s caliphate of ISIL, exactly how the Islamists of Bangladesh, many of whom joined ISIS and fought for them, will treat non-Muslims, women, and progressive Muslims of the country, and destroy democracy.

The Islamists of Bangladesh are already changing the very identity of the Bengalis from a linguistic one, based on which Bangladesh was created, into an Islamic Bengali one. They have practically destroyed secular democracy in Bangladesh. By using their sway on the present government, their clerics are publicly denigrating religious and ethnic minorities. Common Muslims are encouraged to grab minority-owned properties, including graveyards. They have had the government purge the textbooks of non-Muslim authors and have introduced language in the 5th grade Islamic religious textbook that non-Muslims are akin to animals.

Working at a micro level, they are Arabizing the culture. They are replacing Persian borrowed words with Arabic, e. g., “Namaj” with “Salat”, or “Khoda Hafez” with “Allah Hafez”, etc. They have declared that they would tear down all the sculptures in the country. They have routinely destroyed the deities of the Hindus or images of Buddha, and Virgin Mary with complete impunity. Last year, they tore down many sculptures, including one of freedom fighters. And, on December 5, 2020, they severely damaged a sculpture of the Father of the Nation, Sheik Mujibur Rahman. This action can be equated to the tearing down, for example, of
George Washington's statue or monument. We view this horrible incident as being similar to Mullah Omar's destruction of the two Buddha statues in Bamiyan, Afghanistan. This should be a cause for concern to the policy makers in Washington, D.C.

Prime Minister Hasina, who has successfully fooled the world into believing that she supports secular democracy, is in fact helping the Islamists' cause by building 560 mega mosques with Saudi funding. Recently, emerging from a meeting with the Saudi Ambassador to Bangladesh in Dhaka, she declared that another eight 'iconic' mosques would be built with Saudi funding. It may be recalled that, when Saudi King was confronted by the press including Fox News accusing him of funding those mega mosques in order to promote the dangerous Wahabi brand of Islam, he denied it (The Daily Star, May 18, 2017), but the next morning, Prime Minister Hasina declared that Bangladesh itself would fund that project. By helping the Saudis to promote Wahabi Islam in the country, Prime Minister Hasina is only furthering the Islamists' goal. Also, it must be noted that, while Major General Ziaur Rahman of BNP started the process of Islamization, Lt. General Ershad of Jatiya Party declared Islam as the state religion in 1988; and then the currently ruling Awami League government, that is Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, has reaffirmed it through the 15th Amendment to the constitution in indelible ink, by using its two-thirds majority in the Parliament. She signed a peace accord with the indigenous peoples of Chittagong Hill tracts in 1996 which earned her a UNESCO award, but in reality, she has not implemented it yet. In sum, Prime Minister Hasina has engaged in sophisticated chicanery with the international community.

Please recall that, between 2001 and 2005 the world witnessed a semi-Taliban situation in Bangladesh. So, it is time for the United States to ask both Awami League and BNP to unequivocally end relationships with Jamaat-E-Islami, Hefazat-E-Islam, and all other Islamic fundamentalist and extremist groups, as has been called for by the European Union.

For a clear understanding of why we are suggesting this step, let us recall a few incidents highlighting what Bangladesh's Islamists represent politically, and the barbaric atrocities they have perpetrated:

- In 1971, by partnering with the Pakistani army they conducted a genocide in which 3 (three) million unarmed progressive Muslims, minority Hindus, Buddhists and Christians were butchered; 200,000 (two hundred thousand) women raped; and nearly ten million forced to flee the country.
- On April 30, 1992, Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami Bangladesh (HuJI-B), which was then training jihadists in several camps in Bangladesh, demanded that Bangladesh be converted into an Islamic state (Bertil Lintner, https://www.satp.org/satporgp/countries/bangladesh/terroristoutfits/huj.htm)
- By the late 1990s Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami Bangladesh's chief Fazlur Rahman Khalil, who was one of the six signatories on Osama bin Laden's 1998 Declaration of Holy War against the United States (Los Angeles Times, July 2, '08),
- By 2000, the Islamists exported jihadists to fight for the Taliban government in Afghanistan, alongside Bin Laden's Al-Qaeda (CNN.com/WORLD, Dec. 21, 2001). In his interview with CNN reporter Mr. Pelton, John Lindh reported that the “Ansar al Islam is composed of different branches according to ethnic groups. The language is divided into Bengali, and Pakistani and Arabic.”
- Around 2001, the Islamists of Bangladesh declared their goal of creating a larger monolithic Islamic state in Bangladesh by annexing the Arakan province of Burma and parts of the neighboring Indian states (TIME On Line Edition, Oct. 14, 2002), which has been consistently reiterated by every Islamist group operating in Bangladesh.
- It was at that time that we saw such slogans in Dhaka as, “Amra sobat hobo Taliban, Bangla hobe Afghanistan,” which translates to “We shall all be Taliban, and Bangladesh will be another Afghanistan.” (see Eliza Griswold’s article “The Next Islamist Revolution,” The New York Time Magazine, January 23, 2005).
After the fall of Afghanistan, not only did the Bangladeshi *jihadists* return to Bangladesh, there also came a shipload of foreign Afghan war veterans by M. V. Mecca (Please see “Deadly Cargo” by Alex Perry, *ibid*). Jamaat-E- Islami engaged these war veteran *jihadists* as trainers in the Qawmi madrasahs and various camps in the mountains of Chittagong Hill Tracts.

- In October 2001, Jamaat-E-Islami & its allies ascended to power by partnering with the Islamic nationalist party of BNP, and unleashed a reign of terror in the country, which not only forced tens of thousands of minorities to leave the country en masse (*The Guardian*, July 21, 2003) but also forced many progressive Muslims to seek refuge abroad.
- By that time, the Islamic extremists of Bangladesh became so powerful that we frequently saw such media headlines as: “Beware of Bangladesh. Bangladesh: A Cocoon of Terror” (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, April 4 Issue, 2002); or “In Bangladesh, as in Pakistan, a Worrisome Rise in Islamic Extremism” (*The Wall Street Journal*, April 2, 2002).
- In 2004, the Islamists conducted a grenade attack on the current Prime Minister’s meeting in which 24 political leaders/supporters were killed and 300 injured, and the Prime Minister narrowly survived.
- In 2005, the Islamic extremists simultaneously exploded 500 bombs in 300 locations throughout the country, in a show of strength.
- In 2013, with the support of BNP, Hefazat-E-Islam and Jamaat-E-Islami marched to Dhaka with hundreds of thousands of their cadres and allies, seized the city in an attempt to overthrow Sheikh Hasina’s government and establish a caliphate in Bangladesh (*The Daily Star*, April 7, 2013).
- In recent years, they have killed many intellectuals, journalists, foreign clergy members, NGO personnel, bloggers, and educators, who have included foreigners.
- In 2016, Bangladeshis *jihadists* affiliated with IS conducted the Holely Artisan Bakery Café massacre during which they uploaded dead bodies on social media as they slaughtered them, in IS style (*BBC NEWS*, July 2, 2016; *Reuters* Dec. 1, 2016).
- Most recently, Hefazat-E-Islam’s Ameer has demanded that the Hindus and the Ahmadiyya Muslims be declared *kafirs* ‘infidels’ (*Dhaka Tribune*, Feb. 13, 2019). Hefazat-E-Islam has also declared that they will pull down all the statues in the country, including that of the Father of the Nation, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, citing that it is against *sharia* (*BDNews24.com*, Nov 28, ’20).
- Recently the Islamists have declared that they will tear down all the statues and sculptures in the country, and on December 5, 2020 they vandalized a statue of the Father of the Nation Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

In November, 2020 multiple Hindu-owned homes were destroyed in Muradnagar, Cumilla, (https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/nation/2020/11/01/hindu-households-vandalized-torched-for-showing-support-to-france).

80 Hindu homes and 8 temples were destroyed in Shullah, Sylhet, this past week by several hundred Muslims(https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/nation/2021/03/17/hefazate-islam-followers-ransack-hindu-houses-in-sunamganj).

Hundreds of members of a hardline Islamist group attacked Hindu temples and a train in eastern Bangladesh on March 28, ’21 (https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2021-03-28/bangladesh-violence-spreads-after-modi-visit-attacks-on-hindu-temples-train). For example, Narayanganj district they vandalized an ancient Hindu temple, with assailants destroying six idols (https://www.hindustantimes.com/world/hindu-temple-attacked-in-bangladesh/story-2OdZqfyVzeki9B0HGRGwJM.html). In Narayanganj, which is not far from the capital Dhaka, a hundreds of years old temple is being grabbed by the relatives of the city’s mayor, yet the government would not prosecute or punish the perpetrators of those crimes simply because they are Hindus, Buddhists or Christians, whom they consider an expendable commodity.
We know for fact that the Jamaat-E-Islami and Hefazat-E-Islam, who have masterminded and executed these attacks on the minorities of the country, are now radicalizing Rohingya children by setting up hundreds of Qawmi madrasahs in the refugee camps, where there is not a single regular school. We know that Islamic terrorist groups’ main target for recruitment jihadists is impoverished youths like them, and as we know al-Qaida Hind, remnants of IS, and ISI are all active in that particular region of Bangladesh.

Regardless of which political party, or coalition of parties, may have been in power, the vicious campaign against minorities has raged relentlessly. On the one hand, each government has discriminated against the minorities in employment, denied them justice, and seized their land, homes, and businesses by using a law called the Enemy Property Act (later euphemistically renamed Vested Property Act) and given them away to its supporters. And, on the other, the Islamic nationalists, fundamentalists, and extremists have utilized various violent tactics on the minorities. Consequently, tens of millions of minorities were forced to leave the country, resulting in a sharp decline in their population. Whereas the minorities represented approximately 19-20% of Bangladesh’s (then, still East Pakistan) total population in 1970, it is down to less than 10% today. If this sustained, violent campaign by extremists over the last few decades did not take place, the minority population in Bangladesh today would have been nearly 70 million rather than the meager 20 million that remains (Please listen to the Honorable Congressman at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IkpBjKze4Ow; or Dastidar, S. in Bangladesh: a portrait of covert genocide. 2004). In Chittagong Hill Tracts, where the Indo-Mongoloid indigenous peoples represented 98% of the region’s total population in 1947, represent only 44%, today, which has happened due to atrocities conducted against them by the Bengali Muslim settlers and security forces, jointly. Based on a statistical analysis of the current rate of exodus, famous economist, Professor Abul Barakat has predicted (four years ago) that, “No Hindus will be left in [in Bangladesh] after 30 years.” (Dhaka Tribune, Nov. 20, 2016).

The atrocities in Bangladesh have included desecration and destruction of churches, temples and deities; burning down of dwelling houses after looting; kidnapping followed by rape and forced conversion; gang rape, mass rape; burning people alive in their homes; church massacres; and grisly murders.

Tens of millions of minorities have been eliminated or driven out of the country through violence, yet no government including the currently ruling Awami League government, has ever condemned it. Nor has any government prosecuted and punished the perpetrators of crime against the country’s religious and ethnic minorities, thus allowing the Islamists to conduct atrocities against them with complete impunity.

At the directive of the High Court, Prime Minister Hasina instituted a commission called the Shahabuddin Commission to investigate and submit a list of crimes perpetrated against people in the aftermath of the 2001 elections. “The inquiry concluded that more than 25,000 people - including 25 former ministers and MPs of the BNP-Jamaat-led alliance who are now in the opposition – were connected with the attacks (BBC News, Dec. 2, 2012). But Prime Minister Hasina has yet to publish the report in the form of a gazette, nor prosecute or punish the perpetrators. The criminals are all
Islamic nationalists & extremists, so the only reason why Prime Minister refused to prosecute and punish them is that the victims are mostly religious and ethnic minorities. Clearly, when it comes to religious and ethnic minority cleansing, there is little or no difference between BNP, Jatiya Party, Awami League, or the Islamists.

Here are some examples of the horrendous nature of the atrocities that the Islamic nationalists, fundamentalists, and extremists have conducted against the religious and ethnic minorities, with varying degrees of government complicity:

- On April 10, 1992, the town of Logang in the Chittagong Hill Tracts they conducted a horrible massacre of the indigenous peoples. In a letter written to the then Prime Minister Begum Zia on Nov 13, 1992, 17 U.S. Congressman including the Honorable Nancy Pelosi wrote, “According to reliable sources, on April 10, 1992, the town of Logang in the Chittagong Hill Tracts was surrounded by Bengali settlers accompanied by paramilitary forces. The inhabitants of the town were then systematically murdered. The military officials in Khagrachari admit to over 130 dead; estimates from Amnesty International and human rights organizations in Bangladesh range up to 600 or more.” 13 such massacres have been conducted against the indigenous peoples of Chittagong Hill Tracts alone.

- On June 3, 1997, in Baniar Char in the district of Gopalganj, they bombed a Catholic church during Sunday mass, killing 10 people and injuring 20.

- On April 28, 1998, they destroyed and desecrated the statue of Virgin Mary and set ablaze the crucifix at St. Francis Xavier’s High School in Dhaka.

- 200 Hindu women were mass raped by the cadres of BNP and Jamaat-E-Islami at a single spot in one night, reports The Daily Star, Editorial Page Nov. 16, 2001.

- Jamaat-E-Islami ruled (2001-2005), the intensity of the campaign escalated to a level that has been aptly captured by the following two media headlines: “Rape and torture empties villages” (The Guardian, July 21, 2003); [Bangladesh’s religious minorities] are “Safe only in the departure lounge.” (The Economist, Nov. 29, 2003).

- On November 19, 2003, eleven members of Tejendra Sill’s family were burned alive in Banskhali.

- Since 2012, the Islamists have continually hacked into the Facebook accounts of minorities or created fake accounts in their names. They then posted anti-Islam/Prophet statuses and used this as a ploy to conduct pogroms in the minority villages/neighborhoods. For example, in September 2012, in Ramu, Cox’s Bazar, 25,000 (twenty-five thousand) of the Islamists rampaged through 18 Buddhist and Hindu villages during which they burned down homes, temples, violated women, and brutally tortured the Hindus and Buddhists. Whenever such incidents have occurred, the police have arrested the victims, incarcerated them under the Digital Security Act of 2018, rather than the Islamist cyber criminals. Prime Minister Hasina’s courts have slapped long term prison sentences on those innocent minority victims for “hurting the religious sentiments of the Muslims” without due process. Thus, the government the Digital Security Act is serving as the substitute for the Blasphemy Act that the Islamists have asked Prime Minister Hasina to enact.

Given the above, we urge the United Nations as well as other donor nations and their law makers to act now – not only to save Bangladesh’s remaining 19 million religious & ethnic minorities, but also to firmly establish a secular/humanistic democracy there. Echoing what Selig Harrison wrote in the Los Angeles Times on July 2008, we want to say “Get a grip on Dhaka,” and do not write off
democracy in Bangladesh, yet. The Islamists of Bangladesh must not be allowed to hold the entire country hostage. The issue can be addressed by the global community of secular democratic nations—these goals can still be achieved without military intervention. We urge you to act now, before Bangladesh becomes a failed state.

We have a set of recommendations. By implementing these, the dual goal of protecting the minorities and promoting a truly humanistic or secular democracy in Bangladesh can be accomplished.

i. Please declare Jamaat-E- Islami and its violent student wing Islamic Chhatra Shibeer terrorist organizations, like Harkat-ul-Jihad-I-Islami-Bangladesh (HUJI-B) or Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh have been.

ii. Please ask both BNP and Awami League not only to end their relationship with Jamaat-E-Islami, Hefazat-E-Islam and all other Islamic fundamentalists & extremists group, but also ask Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to dismantle those organizations so that that they may not continue to pose threat to religious freedom, existence of the religious & ethnic minorities, regional stability, and secular democracy, as has been called for by the Honorable Congressman Jim Bank in his H. Resolutions 160 and 1156, and the European Union has asked.

iii. Please persuade Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to reinstate the original constitution of the country (1972) by making a good use of her absolute majority in parliament, thus securing a truly humanistic democracy and restoring equal rights of all the citizens of the country.

iv. Please persuade Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to release the minority victims of Facebook hacking from jail, order a judicial review of the prison sentences awarded to the minority victims of Facebook hacking under the Digital Security Act, and prosecute the Facebook hackers and the Islamists who have conducted atrocities against the minorities.

v. Kindly get the Secretary General of the United Nations involved in the process by having our (US) Ambassador to the United Nations insist on the U.N.’s making it a requirement for countries willing to send their army/police officers to serve in the U. N. Peace Keeping Force, to provide equal rights and safety to its religious & ethnic minority citizens.

vi. Enact a Hate Speech & Crime Law, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of crimes against the country’s minorities in a special tribunal, under the Hate Speech & Crime Law, starting with the list of criminals available in the Sahabuddin Commission Report.

vii. Provide reparations to the victims of persecution for their loss of life & property, and help them with the rehabilitation process.

viii. Create separate Hindu, Buddhist, and Christian Foundations through legislation, the way the Islamic Foundation was created in March 1975.

ix. Create a separate Ministry of Minority Affairs, a National Minority Commission, and enact a Minority Protection Law.


xi. Revisit the Enemy Property Repeal Act (a.k.a. Vested Property Law) to include provision for the owners and their heirs’ right to claim property that was seized under the “Enemy Property Act, regardless of their current residency status, as in Germany or Turkey, and then implement it quickly.

xii. Reinstate non-Muslim writers in the textbooks, remove the section in the 5th grade Islamiat in which non-Muslims have been denied the status of humans and likened to animals, regulate waaz ‘the so called interpretation of religion in mammoth gatherings’ so that the clerics may not dehumanize the non-Muslims, spread hatred, or encourage the Muslims to wage attacks on the minorities to grab their property, any more.

xiii. Employ the minorities in the spirit of Affirmative Action in positions of powers and prestige, including the security forces, armed forces, Foreign Service, etc.
xiv. Restore the indigenous peoples’ right to refer to themselves as Adivasis ‘indigenous people,’ since they were the first humans to inhabit the region where they have lived for centuries.

We believe that saving the minorities of Bangladesh is a moral and humanitarian obligation on the part of the United Nations, but it is also in the interest of the community of civilized nations to prevent a an Islamic jihadists' take over of the country and then transforming it into another Taliban Afghanistan. We hope you will take our recommendations seriously.

As mentioned at the very outset, United Nations is an employer of Bangladeshi army and police officers in increasingly greater numbers. It is each army officer or police officer’s dream to get an U. N. assignment in his life time so that he can save enough to buy a house and retire comfortably. Un employment is not only coveted by the individual army officers and police officers but also by the government because it is a source of foreign currency. Therefore, if your office simply mentions to Bangladesh government, army and Police chiefs that the U. N. cannot hire them unless the government prosecute and punish perpetrators of crime against the minorities, the situation will drastically change for the better, overnight.

We humbly request that you kindly do just that to save the minorities of Bangladesh. We fervently hope that you will consider our recommendations and request seriously for the sake of saving the remaining 19 million minorities from the certain elimination through violence.

Thank you for your anticipated intervention.

Sincerely,

Amarendra Roy, Director
Human Rights Congress for Bangladesh Minorities
(An NGO in the special Consultative Status with ECOSOC of the United Nations.

Samir Kumar Das, Secretary General
Bangladeshi Hindus Buddhists & Christian Unity Council, Europe

Arun Barua President Bangladesh Minority Council