



Resolution on the political situation in Bangladesh

Noting that the parliamentary elections held in Bangladesh on 30th December 2018 were marred by widespread irregularities, rigging and violence on opposition candidates across the country;

Noting the report from Transparency International Bangladesh which found widespread irregularities, including fraudulent voting and violent intimidation of voters by officials and supporters of the ruling Awami League;

Observing that following these farcical elections, Sheikh Hasina's government has become tainted internationally and Bangladesh has transformed into a one-party state;

Acknowledging that the US, the European Union and the United Nations have called for immediate credible investigations into these irregularities, but Sheikh Hasina's government and its partisan Election Commission are reluctant to do so;

Considering that thousands of members of the opposition parties remain imprisoned or accused in various fabricated cases;

Observing that the judiciary, police and senior members of the armed forces have been politicized to serve Sheikh Hasina's regime by continuing to grossly violate human rights through intimidation, abduction, torture, extra-judicial killings, etc.;

Noting that thousands of workers, particularly women, are being violently targeted by government authorities to keep them away from forming trade unions, and factories are being pressured to suspend workers who call for human and labor rights;

Recalling that the nation's main opposition Leader, Begum Khaleda Zia, former Prime Minister and Chairperson of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, remains in prison through influence and pressure from the executive body to keep her away from the people with the intention to curb leadership to restore democracy in the country.

The IDC-CDI:

1. Calls on the EU High Representative on Foreign Policy to make an immediate statement on the election in Bangladesh calling for human rights violations and violence on opposition representatives to stop, and for the government of Bangladesh to initiate credible investigations of the electoral process;
2. Calls on the EU High Representative on Foreign Policy to review all privileges given to Bangladesh following the consistent and persistent failure of the Sheikh Hasina government to adhere to the EU's values of democracy, rule of law and human rights, preventing the country from holding free and fair elections over the last ten years;
3. Furthermore, calls on the EU High Representative on Foreign Policy to insist on the Bangladesh government to immediately suspend the Digital Security Act and create conditions for credible, transparent and inclusive elections to restore the country to democratic norms;
4. Calls on the Bangladeshi authorities to return all opposition political leaders, activists and citizens of the country who have been subject to enforced disappearances;

Brussels, April 10th, 2019



5. Condemns the Bangladeshi authorities' non-assistance to allow a CDI delegation to visit Begum Khaleda Zia in prison prior to the farcical elections, despite seeking assistance from the Embassy of Bangladesh in Brussels.
6. Calls on the EU High Representative on Foreign Policy to ask for the release from prison of our member party leader, Begum Khaleda Zia, given her deteriorating health in solitary isolation and the lack of specialist medical attention.
7. Calls on the European Union to immediately review its relations with Bangladesh at all levels other than funding projects related to health and education;
8. Condemns the Bangladeshi authorities' violence and intimidation on thousands of garment workers to keep them away from forming trade unions;
9. Calls on the EU Trade Commissioner to immediately send a trade mission to review relations with Bangladesh, including the EBA scheme currently in force, following the grave violation of political and labour rights. Bangladesh receives the second highest development assistance from the EU just after Afghanistan, approximately 600 million Euros, which includes assistance for democratic governance;
10. Calls on the EU to place sanctions against those law enforcement officers, government ministers and ruling party politicians who call or have strong allegations of committing violence against opposition activists.