

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001526/24
to the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Anthony Smith (The Left)
(20 August 2024)

Subject: Social situation and government repression in Bangladesh

Since 18 July 2024, mass protests led by students have been taking place in Bangladesh against the reintroduction of quotas in public employment, which have been judged to be discriminatory and politically favourable to the current executive.

The Bangladeshi government decided to violently suppress these social protest movements.

As of Tuesday 23 July 2024, the death toll stood at 174, while over 2 580 people had been arrested, according to Agence France-Presse.

Following the statement by a European External Action Service spokesperson on 19 July 2024 and in light of subsequent events, will the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy:

1. condemn the repression taking place in Bangladesh and demand an end to the bloodbath?
2. take a stand in defence of fundamental freedoms, of which an integral part is the right to protest and to make justified claims?

Submitted: 20.8.2024

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Borrell i Fontelles on behalf of the European Commission
(7 October 2024)

The spokesperson statement on Bangladesh of 19 July 2024 mentioned by the Honourable Member ⁽¹⁾ was followed by three statements by the High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) on 30 July, 5 August and 8 August 2024.

In these statements ⁽²⁾, HR/VP voiced the EU concern over unlawful killings and stressed the need to fully respect all human rights and to ensure full accountability.

On 8 August 2024, a new interim-government was sworn-in, led by Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Muhammad Yunus.

Bangladesh is now entering a period of transition and the interim government will have an important task to prepare the ground for democratic elections and ensure accountability for the deaths and violence that have occurred.

The EU looks forward to engaging with the new administration and to supporting this critical transition which should be part of a peaceful and inclusive process underpinned by good governance, democratic values and respect for human rights.

⁽¹⁾ Bangladesh: Statement by the Spokesperson on the recent developments, 19.07.2024 (https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/bangladesh-statement-spokesperson-recent-developments_en).

⁽²⁾ Bangladesh: Statement by the High Representative on recent developments, 30.07.2024 (https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/bangladesh-statement-high-representative-recent-developments_en?s=164); Bangladesh: Statement by the High Representative on the latest developments, 05.08.2024 (https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/bangladesh-statement-high-representative-latest-developments_en); Bangladesh: Statement by the High Representative on the new interim government, 08.08.2024 (https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/bangladesh-statement-high-representative-new-interim-government_en).