



46th regular of the UN Human Rights Council

Item 4: General Debate on human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Oral Statement Delivered by Ahmed Adam

On behalf of the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)

Friday, 12 March 2021

Madam President,

We welcome the Secretary-General's update on the UN involvement in Myanmar. We reiterate the need for accountability for the systemic and structural failures of the UN in Myanmar and its "horrific consequences" including the ongoing genocide of Rohingya. As Rosenthal report suggests, lack of accountability for similar failures in the past, most notably, in Sri Lanka, led to their repetition in Myanmar. We call on the Council to continue to assess the steps taken to remedy these failures.

We draw the Council's attention to rapid deterioration of human rights and erosion of democracy in India. Violent crackdowns on recent farmers protests, temporary internet shutdowns in protests areas and blocking of social media accounts, sedition and other criminal charges against journalists covering protests, as well as criminalisation of human rights defenders including those in Bhima Koregoan case signal a dangerous trend in restrictions on fundamental freedoms in India. We call on India to ensure the rights to peaceful assembly, association and expression, and allow journalists, human rights defenders and civil society are able to continue their legitimate work without fear of intimidation and reprisals.

Finally, we call on the Council to monitor the situation in Thailand where 66 human rights defenders and youth activists face criminal charges under the draconian lese majeste law.¹ These charges and pre-trial detentions of at least 18 activists² including Panusaya 'Rung' Sithijirawattanakul and Arnon Nampa under lese majeste and other criminal charges are part of the systematic attempts to silence the ongoing prodemocracy protests across the country. We urge Thailand to repeal the lese majeste law and align its legislation with international standards.

Thank you

¹ <https://tlhr2014.com/archives/23983> (in Thai)

² <https://prachatai.com/journal/2021/03/92027>