

## Statement

### **Women activists, migrant leaders in Europe express concern at the rise of violence against women in Bangladesh**

**The Hague, 19 December 2011:** Leaders of different migrant organisations in the Netherlands including the Bangladeshi migrant organisation, BASUG, women activists, teachers and different professionals from across Europe in a joint statement on Monday expressed their grave concern at the alarming rise of violence against women in Bangladesh. Quoting a report they said, each day 17 out of 100 women become victims of violence at home or at workplace in Bangladesh and 25% of them die at the end, which they added, could not be allowed to continue.

Expressing concern on the situation they said, in a recent incident Hawa Akhter Jui, a 21 year old woman was brutally attacked by her husband in Narsingdi district of Bangladesh. The husband, an expatriate worker in the UAE chopped the right hand of his wife. Her only fault was that she wanted to pursue studies despite her husband's objections.

In a joint statement they said, although people have become more aware of the issue on violence against women through years of campaign, weak law and its enforcement along with male dominance stand as key obstacles to prevent violence against women in Bangladesh. The signatories demanded of the government of Bangladesh to give exemplary punishment to the husband of Jui and ensure the rights of women at all levels.

According to a rights-based organisation, Odhikar in Dhaka, in 2010 a total of 556 women were raped. Of them 308 children. Of the adults 61 were killed after rape and 119 were victims of gang rape and 2 committed suicide after being violated. Among the children, 30 were killed after being raped, 93 were victims of gang rape and 4 allegedly committed suicide after being raped.

**The signatories to the joint statement are:**

1. Dr. Mekka Abdel Gabbar, Chairperson, Foundation VOND (Sudan Women Organisation), the Netherlands
2. Vincent Gambah, Chairman of AfroEuro, the Netherlands
3. Professor Gerd June, Amsterdam University, the Netherlands
4. G.M. Chowdhury, Executive Director, Betar Bangla, London (the Only 24 hour Radio for Bangladeshi Community in London), UK
5. Dr. Peter Custers, Chairman, International Centre for Democracy in Bangladesh (ICCDB)
6. M M R Monowar, Secretary, International Centre for Democracy in Bangladesh (ICCDB)
7. Bikash Chowdhury Barua, Chairman, BASUG
8. Sudhier Nannan, Secretary of BASUG
9. Dr. Suchandana Roy, Women activist, Delft, the Netherlands
10. Ansar Ahmed Ullah, former Coordinator of Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee, U.K.
11. S. Mukerji, a Bangladeshi watcher
12. Tuky Santillan, Chairperson, Latin American Women Initiative for Development (LAWID), the Netherlands
13. Sylvia van den Berg-Ortega Azurduy, Ayni Bolivia Nederland Foundation & Board Member, Diaspora Forum for Development (DFD), The Netherlands
14. Zainul Abedin, Former Journalist (Bangladesh Times), New York
15. Tapati Das, Women activist, Dhaka
16. Drs. Samuel Guane Ackah, Chairman, ASDA (African Social Development Aid) Amsterdam, the Netherlands
17. Stella Ismail, Director, African Sky, The Netherlands
18. Dr. Ozden Yalim, Board member, MIND (Migrants Women Initiatives in NL for Development)
19. Mashair Saeed Stichting Azza voor Soedanese Vrouwen
20. Runa Laila, PhD fellow,ISS, the Netherlands
21. Habib Ullah, Editor/Program Presenter, Betar Bangla, Germany

22. Alem Desta, Board member, MWPN, the Netherlands
23. Santo L. Deng, President, Diaspora Forum for Development (DFD), the Netherlands
24. Tanbira Talukder, Women activist & writer, the Netherlands
25. Ms. Alice Ennals, Project Coordinator, Norway Development Fund, Oslo
26. Yesuf Gedefaw, ENNOS & Ethiopian community in The Netherlands