



FIAN INTERNATIONAL  
FOR THE RIGHT TO FOOD AND NUTRITION



Human Rights Council – 60<sup>th</sup> Session  
Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2025

### Item 3 - General Debate

*Speaker: Stefania Carrer*

Mr. President,

The Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples is presenting to the Council a report on the recognition of Indigenous Peoples. We draw urgent attention to the systematic and long-standing discrimination faced by the Indigenous Jumma Peoples of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh. Since the country's independence, successive governments have pursued policies aimed at forcibly assimilating Indigenous communities into the dominant Bengali-Muslim identity.

This includes the constitutional imposition of a singular 'Bengali' national identity, denial of Indigenous status, and suppression of Indigenous their languages, cultures, and religious practices. The state continues to prohibit use of the term *Adivasi*, denying Indigenous Peoples the right to self-identification.

The situation is exacerbated by military-backed settlement programs that have displaced Indigenous communities. Indigenous lands are being seized for militarization, tourism, and religious infrastructure, without free, prior and informed consent, resulting in violations of their human rights, including to their right to food. These land grabbing is accompanied by cultural erasure, including the renaming of villages and places with Bengali-Islamic names.

Alarming reports also indicate coerced religious conversions of Indigenous children, particularly in remote and impoverished areas, under the guise of education and welfare.

Despite the 1997 CHT Accord promising Indigenous autonomy and protection of their rights, the agreement it remains largely unimplemented.

We urge the Council and relevant Special Rapporteurs to call on Bangladesh to:

- Fully implement the CHT Accord,
- Recognize the Indigenous status of the Jumma Peoples, and
- Cease forced assimilation policies resulting in violations of cultural and linguistic rights.

I thank you