



**UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW
BANGLADESH
THIRD CYCLE 2017
Joint stakeholder submission**

Freemuse is an independent international membership organization advocating and defending the right to artistic freedom worldwide. Freemuse has held Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) since 2012.

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Drik Picture Library is an award winning innovative media organization known for its outstanding quality and social commitment. Established in 1989, using the power of the visual medium, its major areas of expertise include advocacy and awareness campaigns, production of communication material, research, and ‘state of the art’ multimedia services and training.

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PEN International promotes literature and defends freedom of expression. Through Centres in over 100 countries, PEN operates on five continents. PEN International is a non-political organisation which holds Special Consultative Status at the UN and Associate Status at UNESCO.

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PEN Bangladesh, founded in 1972, is formed of a membership of over 100 writers, journalists and academics. The Centre strives to promote the universal mission of PEN International through both public events and advocacy.

Freemuse, Drik, PEN International and PEN Bangladesh welcome the opportunity to contribute to the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process of Bangladesh. Our organisations’ focus is on Bangladesh’s compliance to its commitments under international human rights instruments relating to **cultural rights, freedom of expression, creativity and the arts**, as well as guarantees under the Constitution, and to recommendations accepted by Bangladesh during the second cycle of the UPR in 2013.

This submission is based on a legal study, a journalistic report, interviews, desk research and a UPR workshop held in Dhaka in May 2017 with local artists, journalists and human rights advocates.