What role do lawmakers play during a state of emergency?

As directly elected representatives, lawmakers play a crucial role in supporting government efforts to combat the coronavirus and steering the country back on track with human rights and democratic principles. In the end, it is certain that parliamentarians will continue to stage debates during times of emergency, and lawmakers will fully exercise their mandate.

In particular, parliamentarians should be able to provide ongoing, periodic, independent reviews of the necessity for the use of emergency powers to ensure public health and safety, in addition to reviewing liberty. Some measures and legislation adopted under emergency powers could militarily endanger and threaten human rights and democracy. Parliamentarians can help mitigate the impact of emergency powers and prevent potential human rights abuses. Parliamentarians can also hold governments to account, especially by publicly scrutinizing human rights and democracy.

What are the permissible restrictions to human rights during an emergency?

Some human rights and freedoms of movement (freedom of expression and peaceful assembly) can be switched for public health needs. This is why, in times of emergency, lawmakers are required to ensure that these rights must be respected in the following specific circumstances:

- Measurers adopted must be proportionate.
- Measures adopted should only be strictly necessary to address the threats and can only be maintained in the country as long as the COVID-19 pandemic lasts. Any limitation imposed for a different purpose could amount to an abuse of power.
- Measures adopted must be justified (in proportion to the need for public health), and the least intrusive possible.
- Measures adopted should also be discriminatory and be applied to individuals or groups of people as part of a general overall approach.
- Measures adopted should be communicated with the seriousness of the infection. Measures should not be imposed unilaterally, or it must be transparent.

What are the powers of the police during an emergency?

Police and all law enforcement officers should be harnessed only when necessary and minimally intrusive. Some vocal human rights organizations have诟本的 effectiveness in times of emergencies. International and regional mechanisms establish such a type of conduct for law enforcement. The right to life is the very reason for the use of force. Criminals and terrorists must be dealt with. These measures should be communicated with the seriousness of the infection. Measures should not be imposed unilaterally, or it must be transparent.