

Statement from Rohingya Communities Worldwide

Request OIC to support UN Commission of Inquiry

17th January 2017

We, the undersigned organisations, representing Rohingya communities around the world, would like to express our deepest appreciation to the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Government of Malaysia with Honourable Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak for holding an Emergency Meeting of the OIC Foreign Ministers on Rohingya crisis on 19 January in Kuala Lumpur.

The longstanding Rohingya problem of ethnic, religious and political problem has been going on for over seven decades from 1942 Muslim Massacre in Arakan. Particularly the successive military regimes from 1962 have been making all out efforts to annihilate the Rohingya people from their ancestral homeland of Arakan, by means of frequent armed operations and oppressive laws under consistent state policies of discrimination, exclusion and extermination against them. In violation of the customary international law the military had enacted the world's most oppressive Myanmar Citizenship Law of 1982 criminally depriving the Rohingya of their right to nationality as well as their human rights and freedom.

Due to mass atrocity crimes, more than half of the Rohingya population has had left the country. Those who are still in Arakan are being systematically destroyed since 1978. From June 2012 state-sponsored genocidal onslaughts occurred and reoccurred in Arakan and about 300,000 Rohingya were killed, drowned and missing in addition to large-scale destruction of their villages, mosques and madarassas and properties. More than 140,000 displaced Rohingya were herded to squalid semi-concentration camps while over 100,000 escaped persecution to take refuge in foreign countries.

From 9 October 2016, under the pretext of hunting down the assailants of the police outposts, the military, security forces and Buddhist Rakhine militias have been carrying mass atrocity crimes creating the Maungdaw district a "killing zone", unobserved by the outside world due to sealing off the area in Northern Arakan. An estimated 500 people were killed or burned down; at least 300 women and girls were raped, unknown number of people arrested, about 2500 houses torched, valuables and properties looted and foodstuff destroyed forcing about 65,000 people to cross over to Bangladesh. These crimes are still on-going. State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who has been protecting the criminal military, is morally and officially responsible for the crimes against Rohingya that amount to genocide and crimes against humanity as per Articles 6 and 7 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998). The UN Human Rights Commission stated that violation of human rights of Rohingya may constitute crimes against humanity.

The Aung San Suu Kyi's NLD-led government has manifestly failed or is unwilling to conduct any credible investigation into atrocity crimes against Rohingya. Instead the government with the military is shamelessly denying any human rights violations against them. Thus the defenceless Rohingya continue to be subjected to crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. In the absence of national protection, the international community has a responsibility to intervene into Arakan in order to end the violations and protect the civilian population.

We therefore call upon the OIC and its member states to officially support the establishment of a UN Commission of Inquiry into the totality of the situation in Rakhine State, where most Rohingya live.

We further call upon the OIC to endeavour utmost for ensuring that the establishment of such a Commission is included in the Burma/Myanmar resolution at the next session of the Human Rights Council.

We believe that the establishment of a UN Commission of Inquiry is a crucial first step to start to address the cycle of discrimination, persecution and violence our people face. The Commission must investigate human rights violations which have taken place in order to establish the truth, investigate government laws and policies used against the Rohingya, and make recommendations to the government of Burma/Myanmar and the international community on how to address the situation, ensuring strict compliance with international law and human rights standards.

Our existence as a race is under threat. Failure to act now will prolong our suffering and create greater regional problems and insecurity in the future, and hence we look to you for help in our most desperate hour.

Signatories:

1. Arakan Rohingya National Organisation
2. Burmese Rohingya Organisation UK
3. British Rohingya Community in UK
4. Burmese Rohingya Community in Denmark
5. Burmese Rohingya Association Japan
6. Burmese Rohingya Community Australia
7. Burmese Rohingya Association in Queensland-Australia (BRAQA)
8. Canadian Burmese Rohingya Organisation
9. Myanmar Ethnic Rohingya Human Rights Organisation in Malaysia (MERHROM)
10. Rohingya American Society
11. Rohingya Arakanese Refugee Committee
12. Rohingya Community in Germany
13. Rohingya Community in Switzerland
14. Rohingya Community in Finland
15. Rohingya Community in Italy
16. Rohingya Community in Sweden
17. Rohingya Organisation Norway
18. Rohingya Society Malaysia
19. Rohingya Society Netherlands

For more information, please contact:

Tun Khin (Mobile): +44 7888714866
Nay San Lwin(Mobile): +49 69 26022349
Ko Ko Lin (Mobile): +880 1726068413