



**OIC/ACM-2019/CG-ROHINGYA/REPORT/FINAL**

**REPORT  
OF THE  
CONTACT GROUP ON ROHINGYA MUSLIMS OF MYANMAR**

**UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK  
25 SEPTEMBER 2019**

# **REPORT OF THE CONTACT GROUP ON ROHINGYA MUSLIMS OF MYANMAR**

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1. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Contact Group on Rohingya Muslims of Myanmar held their meeting on the sidelines of the Annual Coordination Meeting on 24 September 2019 in New York under the Chairmanship of His Excellency the Secretary General, Dr. Yousef A. Al-Othaimen.
2. The Meeting reiterated the strong condemnation of the systematic brutal acts and horrendous atrocities perpetrated against the Rohingya Muslim Community in Myanmar, especially post 25 August 2017, which constitute a serious and blatant violation of international law, international human rights conventions as well as violations of international humanitarian law and in total disregard of Myanmar's state responsibility to protect its unarmed civilian Muslim minority;
3. The Meeting denounced the involvement of security forces and militias in continued acts of violence towards Rohingya Muslims including mass gang-rape, killings in thousands including of babies and children, brutal beatings, disappearances, eviction and forced expulsion of inhabitants, arbitrary arrests, detentions, torture, in addition to burning of Rohingya homes, places of worship, villages and fields of standing crops;
4. The Meeting expressed serious concern about the deteriorating security, human rights and humanitarian situation in Rakhine State, and the continued serious violations and abuses of human rights of Rohingya Muslims, as well as statelessness, disenfranchisement, economic dispossession, marginalization and deprivation of livelihoods, as well as restrictions on freedom of movement for persons belonging to the Rohingya community, including the confinement of approximately 120,000 people in camps for internally displaced persons, the majority of whom rely entirely on foreign aid;
5. The Meeting expressed serious concern that, despite the fact that the Rohingya population had been living in Myanmar for generations prior to its independence and have no ties to anywhere but Myanmar, they have been made stateless since the enactment of the 1982 Citizenship Law and since then have been subjected to restrictions on access to education, health services and livelihoods, underscoring that the lack of citizenship status and related civil and political rights of Rohingya Muslims and others, including voting rights, is a serious human rights violation;
6. The Meeting expressed concern over the fact that any radicalization or infiltration of radical elements into the Rohingya minority community may further complicate the solution of the problem and have serious implications on regional security;
7. The Meeting expressed deep indignation at credible reports, assessments and conclusions of various international and human rights organizations that recent atrocities are part of a systematic

strategy and deliberate plan of ethnic cleansing of Rohingya Muslims of Rakhine State which have since August 2017, affected over 700,000 Muslims who have been forcibly displaced to Bangladesh, in addition to the 87,000 Rohingya who have been displaced since violent incidents of October 2016 and more than 300,000 who have fled previous episodes of violence since 1990;

8. The Meeting expressed full solidarity with the Government and people of Bangladesh, unfairly affected with the influx of a million plus Rohingya and appreciate them for opening their hearts and borders for the distressed community now facing an existential threat at the deviant policies and brutal practices of “ethnic cleansing” pursued systematically, at genocidal scale, in Myanmar in violation of human rights and total disregard of all international and civilized norms and laws;
9. The Meeting called upon the Government of Myanmar:
  - a) To take urgent measures to for a sustainable return of Rohingya refugees and internally displaced Rohingya Muslims to their homeland, Rakhine State in safety, security, dignity and with ensured livelihood.
  - b) To honor its obligations under International Law and Human Rights covenants, and to take all measures to immediately halt all vestiges and manifestations of the practice of ethnic cleansing, genocide, violence of all types, vigilantism, acts of dispersion and discriminatory practices against Rohingya Muslims, as well as the continuous attempts to obliterate their Islamic culture and identity immediately; including delisting them from household lists and demolition of places of worship, institutions and houses of Muslim minorities.
  - c) To eliminate the root causes, including the denial of citizenship based on the 1982 Citizenship Act which has led to statelessness and deprivation of their rights, and the continued dispossession and discrimination affecting the Rohingya Muslim Minorities, and work towards a just and sustainable solution to this issue.
  - d) To seek to address all aspects of insecurity in Rakhine comprehensively and to this end positively engage with the governments of neighboring countries, including Bangladesh, on external aspects of insurgency and militancy in Rakhine, and cross border crimes such as human trafficking, irregular border crossing and settlement, smuggling of illegal drugs and arms, along with cooperation in various sectors for development and economic uplift that are of mutual interest and restore the citizenship of the Rohingya Muslim community with all associated rights, which was revoked in the Citizenship Act of 1982.
  - e) To facilitate, for the sake of transparency and accountability, international, independent and impartial investigations into allegations of human rights abuses, atrocities and violations, including sexual violence, rape, and abuse and violence against children, including violations and abuses carried out by members of the military, other Government agents and members of vigilante groups, including those motivated by

extreme views against Rohingya Muslims and those who divide communities and to hold to account all those responsible for such acts and to provide justice for victims.

- f) To take urgent measures for a sustainable implementation of the “Arrangement on return of displaced persons from Rakhine State” with the Government of Bangladesh, signed on 23 November 2017 and subsequent arrangements and mechanisms agreed, by ensuring that the repatriation of any Rohingya refugees to Myanmar must be voluntary, safe, dignified, sustainable and uphold their human rights.
- g) To allow Muslims meaningful and unhindered freedom of movement within Rakhine State to pursue livelihood options and to access healthcare and education without any hindrance and allow free access of local and international staff of humanitarian agencies to afford affected Muslims and vulnerable population humanitarian assistance based on their specific needs.
- h) To reverse and abandon policies, directives and practices that marginalize the Rohingya community economically and socially, such as demolition of houses under the pretext that their houses were unauthorized, confiscation of lands in the name of development and social projects delegitimizing their ownership of lands, depriving them from business opportunities and accessing market places as well as employment opportunities.
- i) To implement the recommendations of the Rakhine State Commission, chaired by the former UN Secretary General, Mr Kofi Annan, issued on 24 August 2017 in a swift and timely manner for stability, peace and prosperity in Rakhine State, in full consultation with all the communities concerned.
- j) Take steps for the effective implementation of the tripartite agreement signed on 6 June 2018 with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). This is a necessary step towards establishing a framework for cooperation between the United Nations and Myanmar in order to create conditions conducive to the voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable repatriation of refugees and to help create improved and resilient livelihoods for all communities living in Rakhine state.
- k) To accept the UN Human Rights Council’s fact finding mission to conduct a thorough and independent investigation into all alleged violations of international human rights law and to bring the perpetrators to justice.
- l) To take all necessary measures to restore peace and inter-communal harmony through dialogue and a comprehensive reconciliation process concerning all segments of the Myanmar society. This includes tackling the rise of hate speech and the spread of propaganda by right wing extremists against the Rohingya population.

10. The Meeting expressed cautious optimism at the general arrangements agreed between the Governments of Bangladesh and Myanmar as an initial step towards sustainable return and reintegration of all displaced Rohingya into Myanmar society as equal members and until their full realisation occurs in letter and spirit, urge Member States and the international community to stand with the Government of Bangladesh and the Rohingya community in support and with humanitarian assistance in a collective responsibility of custodianship of the repatriation process;
11. The Meeting took note of the Memorandum of Understanding of 6 June 2018 signed between the Government of Myanmar and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), to provide assistance to the repatriation process of displaced persons from Rakhine State in implementation of the "Arrangement on Return of Displaced Persons from Rakhine State" which was agreed between the Governments of Myanmar and Bangladesh on 23 November 2017;
12. The Meeting invited OIC member states to join the efforts of the international community towards lifting all restrictions on freedom of movement in Rakhine state and ensuring an inclusive and transparent citizenship verification process that leaves no individual unregistered nor hinders their access to essential social services, including education and health care;
13. The Meeting encouraged the efforts of the OIC Ad hoc Ministerial Committee on Accountability for Human Rights Violations Against the Rohingya to carry out the tasks of ensuring accountability and justice for gross violations of international human rights and humanitarian laws and principles; Assisting in information gathering and evidence collection for accountability purposes; Mobilizing and coordinating international political support for accountability for the Human Rights Violations against the Rohingya in Myanmar;
14. The Meeting also called on the Member States, OIC institutions and Islamic NGOs to continue to extend generously humanitarian assistance in order to alleviate the suffering of Rohingya IDPs and refugees, including supporting the efforts of the host countries. In that regard the Meeting agreed to continue efforts to coordinate and dispatch humanitarian life-saving aid, especially medical and nutrition supply to the affected areas in Myanmar. In addition, the Meeting urged all States to continue to extend all possible forms of humanitarian aid and assistance to Rohingya Muslims, and particularly to IDPs and the refugees living outside their homeland. This includes raising funds for humanitarian relief;
15. The Meeting called upon OIC Member States and the international community to continue their efforts to ensure the return of all Myanmar refugees displaced from their homes and intensify their efforts in international fora to restore the nationality and citizenship rights of Rohingya as well as protecting the rights of Muslim minorities in Myanmar;
16. The Meeting welcomed the statements by different religious and community leaders who have called for calm and disapproved of the use of violence against civilians in the name of Buddhism;

17. The Meeting supported expansive interfaith dialogue efforts and encouraged the Myanmar government to support ground-up initiatives to promote inter-ethnic and inter-communal harmony. Member States were called upon to facilitate such projects in cooperation with authorities on the ground;
18. The Meeting took note that infrastructure development assistance and community engagement would be more effective in bringing peace in the affected areas. In this regard, IDB and ISF should take a more active role in this area;
19. The Meeting acknowledged the substantial costs and social challenges incurred by countries in the region as a consequence of hosting forcibly displaced Rohingyas from Myanmar, and invited OIC Member States to assist these countries in accordance with the principles of burden-sharing and shared responsibility, and in the spirit of Islamic solidarity;
20. The Meeting acknowledged the efforts by Member States which had provided humanitarian and development assistance for the Rohingya people and encouraged all States to formulate development projects that will provide education and health services, vocational training that will benefit all persons in Rakhine state, regardless of ethnicity or religion;
21. The Meeting reiterated its welcome of the UN Security Council visit to Bangladesh and Myanmar co-led by Kuwait, Peru and the United Kingdom with a view to finding a durable solution to the plight of the persecuted Rohingyas;
22. The Meeting underscored the need for concrete actions by the Security Council to facilitate the sustainable repatriation of the Rohingya to their motherland/homeland as recommended by UN SG Special Envoy Christine Schraner Burgener in her report to the UN Security Council on 28 February 2019;
23. The Meeting requested the OIC Secretary General to continue efforts to arrange for a high level delegation to visit Myanmar to discuss mutual concerns and the crises facing the Rohingya people. In this regard the Meeting called upon the Government of Myanmar to receive the delegation and facilitate the visit;
24. The Meeting requested the OIC Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC) to continue to raise the situation of the Rohingya Muslim Minority as a priority issue on its agenda and particularly during the upcoming sessions of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva;
25. The Meeting requested the OIC Secretary-General to continue to explore initiatives with the UN Secretary-General and ASEAN Secretary-General to engage with the Government of Myanmar in resolving the plight of the Rohingya;
26. The Meeting called upon Permanent Missions of OIC Member States in Geneva to remain engaged with the human rights situation of Rohingya Muslim Minority of Myanmar in the UN Human Rights Council and, as an update of the OIC-Group led resolution A/HRC/29/21 on

“Situation of human rights of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar” adopted at the 29th regular session of the UN Human Rights Council in June 2015, to table a draft resolution with the same title by the OIC Group in Geneva in the next regular session of the UN Human Rights Council in March 2020, with necessary updates and inclusions in the text reflecting the continued deterioration of the human rights situation of the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar since October 2016, and more specifically since August 2017, resulting into the ongoing crisis due to the exodus of more than seven hundred thousand Rohingya Muslims to Bangladesh;

27. The Meeting requested the Members of the OIC Contact Group to continue to convene regular meetings in New York, Geneva and Brussels to review the evolving situation of the Rohingya Muslim minority and explore all possible strategies, in the United Nations, the European Union, and other international organizations to end the suffering of the Rohingya Muslim minority and report to the OIC Secretary General.

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