



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL DELIVERS STATEMENT AT UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL CALLING FOR ACCOUNTABILITY FOR INTERNATIONAL CRIMES COMMITTED IN MYANMAR

In a statement to the UN Human Rights Council (“the Council”) today, Amnesty expressed concern over the dramatic deterioration of the human rights situation in Myanmar over the past year.

Security forces have waged a vicious campaign of violence in northern Rakhine State, which clearly amounts to crimes against humanity. To date, over 670,000 people have fled to Bangladesh. The campaign to drive Rohingya out of Myanmar continues in the form of forced starvation,¹ ongoing destruction of property, and the threat of further violence. Satellite imagery released by Amnesty International today clearly shows that authorities are building over burned Rohingya villages – including constructing new security bases – indicating an alarming militarization of the region.²

The appalling violations that have been perpetrated against the Rohingya shock the conscience. However, they do not occur in isolation.

In northern Myanmar, the same military has been responsible for serious violations of international law, including torture, arbitrary detentions, unlawful killings, enforced disappearance and indiscriminate shelling of civilian areas. Many of these violations constitute war crimes. The overwhelming majority of these violations have gone unpunished.

While the military continues to violate rights with impunity, Myanmar’s civilian-led government has proven itself to be unable and unwilling to hold those responsible to account. It is time for the international community to step in.

During the interactive dialogue at the Council today, Amnesty International welcomed indications that the UN’s independent international fact-finding mission on Myanmar³ will make specific recommendations for an accountability mechanism in its final report, due to be presented to the Council in September, as part of its mandate “to ensure full accountability for perpetrators and justice for victims.”⁴ Amnesty also called for the fact-finding mission’s recommendations to be formally transmitted to the UN General Assembly

¹ *Myanmar forces starve, abduct and rob Rohingya, as ethnic cleansing continues* (Index: ASA 16/7835/2018), 7 February 2017, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa16/7835/2018/en/>

² *Remaking Rakhine State* (Index: ASA 16/8018/2018), 12 March 2018.

³ <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/MyanmarFFM/Pages/Index.aspx>.

⁴ Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 24 March 2017: Situation of human rights in Myanmar, UN Doc: A/HRC/RES/34/22, 3 April 2017, para 11.

and the UN Security Council for immediate attention and action.

Amnesty also expressed support for the recommendation of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar⁵ for the establishment of “a structure based in Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh [...] to investigate, document, collect, consolidate, map, and analyse evidence of human rights violations and abuses;” committed in Rakhine State, “to support and facilitate [...] independent international criminal proceedings in national or international courts.”⁶ The organization urged the Council to mandate such a structure without delay, during its current session.

Background

The above statement was delivered on 12 March 2018, during an interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar and the Independent international fact-finding mission on Myanmar, during the 37th regular session of the UN Human Rights Council. During the interactive dialogue, the Special Rapporteur presented her annual report to the Human Rights Council, available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session37/Pages/ListReports.aspx>. Amnesty International also submitted a written statement ahead of the 37th session, calling on the Council to address the dramatic deterioration of the human rights situation in Myanmar, available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa16/7915/2018/en/>.

The Council is due to adopt a resolution on the human rights situation in Myanmar during its current session, which ends on 23 March 2018.

⁵ <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/CountriesMandates/MM/Pages/SRMyanmar.aspx>.

⁶ *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar*, UN Doc: A/HRC/37/70, 9 March 2018, para 74.