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ORAL STATEMENT
ITEM 4: INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE WITH THE FACT FINDING MISSION ON MYANMAR

RAKHINE STATE CRISIS REQUIRES URGENT INTERVENTION

UN Human Rights Council
Thirty-sixth session
11-29 September 2017

Mr. President,

Since the coordinated attacks on dozens of security posts on 25 August, the Myanmar security forces have carried out an unlawful and disproportionate campaign of violence against the Rohingya community. Amnesty International has documented killings, indiscriminate firing of weapons in civilian areas, widespread burning of homes and villages, and the planting of landmines on the Myanmar-Bangladesh border. We have also received reports of human rights abuses by a Rohingya armed group.

Over 370,000 Rohingya have fled to Bangladesh since 25 August. This adds to the estimated 87,000 who fled following similar security operations which began in October 2016. We believe that almost half a million of Rohingya have left the country in the last year.

What we are witnessing in Rakhine State is in Amnesty International's view ethnic cleansing, and in legal terms crimes against humanity, in particular the crimes of murder and deportation or forcible transfer of population.

Mr. President,

While all eyes are on Rakhine State, it is important to remember that the Myanmar military is also committing war crimes and grave violations of human rights law in other parts of the country. Our organization continues to document indiscriminate attacks, enforced disappearances and torture perpetrated against ethnic minority civilians in Kachin and northern Shan States. We have also documented abuses by ethnic armed groups in these areas.

The Fact Finding Mission provides an important opportunity for the examination of human rights violations within the wider national context. It is also well placed to identify their root causes and make effective recommendations to address them. But it must be given the time and resources to do so.

Amnesty International therefore urges the Council to both address this rapidly deteriorating situation through the adoption of a resolution and the extension of the mandate of the Fact Finding Mission.

We would be interested to hear from the Fact Finding Mission about their progress and the cooperation they have received so far from the Myanmar government.

Thank you, Mr. President.