

**Sept.14 2017**

## **EBN Statement on Rohingya Crisis**

### **EU's reaction to situation in Rakhine State wholly inadequate**

Members of the European Burma Network are deeply concerned by the wholly inadequate response to the major human rights and humanitarian crisis engulfing Burma.

The High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission Federica Mogherini have issued two statements on the Rakhine Crisis on 6<sup>th</sup> September and 11<sup>th</sup> September, the first one almost two weeks after the crisis began, both without even mentioning the Rohingya by name. Neither did the statements from the European External Action Service condemn the Burmese military explicitly for the attacks on the Rohingya, the one on 6<sup>th</sup> September just weakly stating: "The security forces involved in ongoing operations have a duty to exercise maximum restraint and to protect unarmed civilians. There is an urgent need for a de-escalation of tensions, on all sides, and for full observance of international human rights law."

What is unfolding in Burma right now is probably the worst human rights and man-made humanitarian crisis in decades.

In just three weeks:

- Official figures say hundreds have been killed by the military, reliable Rohingya sources say well over 4,500 - some sources even say more than 8,000.
- More than 35,000 Rohingya homes and 140 villages may have been destroyed.
- According to UN estimates, 370,000 Rohingya have fled to Bangladesh since August 25. At least 100,000 may still be displaced inside Burma.
- Over 40,000 Rohingya trapped on mountains with no food, medicine or shelter.
- People denied life-saving aid.
- Reports of ARSA (Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army) targeting ethnic Rakhine, Hindus and others, as well as Rakhine mobs attacking Rohingya villagers.
- The government and their spokespersons still denying abuses are taking place and exacerbating tensions.
- The government and their spokespersons falsely accusing UN/INGOs of assisting terrorists.
- Allegations starting to emerge of burning children alive, torture, and other human rights violations.

The EU needs to move from issuing weak statements to concrete action to help stop the attacks on the Rohingya. It is completely unacceptable that the EU during this crucial time of persecution of the Rohingya does not even refer to the ethnic group by their name.

The EU must now use its powers to put pressure on the Burma military Senior General Min Aung Hlaing through a number of channels.

The European Union and their member states should:

- Publicly and privately apply diplomatic pressure on the military
- Adopt a common position banning the supply of any kind of equipment to the military, and ending all training and co-operation programmes with the military
- Support and work for the introduction of a United Nations arms embargo against the military in Burma

- Enact a visa ban on senior military figures, except for meetings specifically on human rights and democracy
- Support an emergency resolution on the situation at the Human Rights Council
- Resume the UN General Assembly Human Rights resolution on Burma
- Provide additional funding to meet the needs of refugees in Bangladesh

Any engagement with the Burmese military should be critical engagement. The EU should also make it clear to the Burmese government that future support and co-operation is conditioned on a major change of policy towards the Rohingya.

END

Signed by

Actions Birmanie  
Association Suisse Birmanie  
Burma Action Ireland  
Burma Campaign UK  
Burmese Rohingya Organisation UK  
Christian Solidarity Worldwide  
Info Birmanie  
Norwegian Burma Committee  
Olof Palme International Center  
Society for Threatened Peoples – Germany  
Swedish Burma Committee

Link to EEAS Statements: [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/31738/statement-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-situation-rakhine-state-myanmar\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/31738/statement-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-situation-rakhine-state-myanmar_en)

[https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/myanmar-burma/31921/statement-hrvp-mogherini-latest-developments-rakhine-state-myanmar-and-border-region\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/myanmar-burma/31921/statement-hrvp-mogherini-latest-developments-rakhine-state-myanmar-and-border-region_en)