

PUBLIC STATEMENT

Justice and Inclusion for the Rohingya Cannot Wait

25 August 2021

Today, on the fourth anniversary of the Rohingya genocide in Myanmar, we call for justice and inclusion for the Rohingya.

Decades of discrimination and mistreatment peaked on 25 August 2017, when the Myanmar military initiated a brutal crackdown against the Rohingya in Rakhine State that led to mass human rights violations and caused over 725,000 Rohingya to flee to Bangladesh. Today, approximately 1 million Rohingya reside in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. The overcrowded and under-resourced camps are ill-equipped to face rising COVID-19, dengue fever, and cholera cases and are vulnerable to floods and fires. Meanwhile, back in Myanmar, hundreds of thousands of Rohingya remain internally displaced, many confined in detention camps, and the country as a whole, since the 1 February 2021 coup, is in a state of crisis.

Despite the hardship the Rohingya have faced, they demonstrate, on a daily basis, their resilience and strength. Since 2019, AJAR has worked with Rohingya refugees in the camps and has witnessed this determination first-hand. Carrying the trauma of the past and the uncertainty of the future, the refugees persist, tirelessly seeking out new ways to improve their circumstances while continuing to honor their culture and faith.

Several international mechanisms are working to advance justice for the Rohingya, and the pro-democracy movement has taken steps to show its support of the Rohingya. However, at present, both justice and the voluntary, safe, and dignified return of the Rohingya remain a distant goal. This must change.

On this anniversary, we therefore call on the international community to:

- Advance initiatives providing urgent and interim measures to help repair the lives of survivors and invest in long-term empowerment programming for survivors;
- Promote accountability by joining The Gambia in its case against Myanmar before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and by supporting and enhancing understanding of the accountability mechanisms, including the ICJ, the International Criminal Court (ICC), and the Independent Investigative Mechanisms for Myanmar (IIMM), and by pursuing universal jurisdiction cases in their own countries;
- Support the pro-democracy movement in Myanmar;
- Support Bangladesh in the provision of assistance and resources to the Rohingya; and
- Maintain pressure on ASEAN to give effect to the right of Rohingya survivors to an effective and enforceable remedy.

Signatories:

- Asia Justice and Rights (AJAR)
- #Sisters2Sisters
- Perlindungan Insani Indonesia
- KontraS
- KontraS Aceh
- The May 18 Memorial Foundation
- Cross Cultural Foundation (CrCF)
- Kurawal Foundation
- Migrant CARE
- Milk Tea Alliance Indonesia
- SP Kinasih Solidaritas Perempuan
- YLBHI
- Asia Democracy Network (ADN)
- Advocacy Forum
- Suara Perempuan Desa (SPD - Rural Women Voices)
- Kachin Women's Association Thailand (KWAT)
- Asosiasaun Chega! Ba Ita (ACbit)

#WithTheRohingya