



PRESS RELEASE

Argentine Prosecutor seeks arrest warrants for genocide and crimes against humanity committed against Rohingya community

Cox's Bazar, 4 July 2024

On 28 June 2024, Argentine Prosecutor Guillermo Marijuán asked the federal criminal court in Buenos Aires, Argentina to order international arrest warrants against 25 Myanmar government officials for the **crime of genocide and crimes against humanity** committed against the Rohingya community between 2012 and 2018. This is the first time that arrest warrants are being sought against the Myanmar military for the crime of genocide, the historic persecution and violence suffered by the Rohingya community, which culminated in the horrific “clearance operations” in 2017 and the death of at least 10,000 people and the mass exodus of over 700,000 Rohingya – [half of them children](#).

Requests for arrest warrants include the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Min Aung Hlaing, the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, Soe Win, and the former commander of the Western Command, Maung Maung Soe.

Legal Action Worldwide (LAW) represents Rohingya survivors who provided testimonies in this case in 2023. This is the first time that any Rohingya survivors from the 2017 “clearance operations” have testified before a court of law.

"I could not believe I could tell a court about my sufferings. I could not believe it until I stepped into the courtroom. I did it for justice, for my grandchildren, for a future where we can return home with dignity... Who would have thought that we, the Rohingya women, would be taking the Myanmar military to the court one day" - said Haseeba, a female witness, name changed to protect identity.

The request from the Prosecutor, under Article 294 of the Argentinian Code of Criminal Procedure to seek statements from the identified perpetrators and issue international arrest warrants is a result of an investigation under the principle of **universal jurisdiction**, which was initiated following a [complaint](#) filed by the Burmese Rohingya Organisation UK (BROUK) in November 2019. It is now for the Court to decide on whether there is sufficient evidence to issue the warrants.

"The request for warrants by the Prosecutor is a critical step in the fight for justice for the Rohingya community. A positive decision of the federal court in Argentina can challenge the impunity enjoyed by the Myanmar military, which has emboldened it to continue to commit atrocity crimes against civilians across the country. Many of the witnesses, who are mainly women who have suffered from severe sexual violence have shown incredible bravery by coming

forward and they are an inspiration to us all,” said Antonia Mulvey, Executive Director of LAW.

Sexual violence perpetrated mainly by the Myanmar military was a hallmark of the 2017 “clearance operations” against the Rohingya. The UN International Independent Fact-Finding Mission concluded that the scale and brutality of sexual violence against women and girls was one of the factors that indicated the Myanmar military’s genocidal intent to destroy the Rohingya community.

“I am truly pleased that the Argentinian prosecutor has asked for Myanmar military to provide answers to the court. I strongly believe that if we can catch the high-ranking military or police officials, we can protect my community. Arresting the masterminds behind these atrocities will bring peace to those who are still suffering inside Myanmar.” - said Salma, a female witness, name changed to protect identity.

LAW represents over 400 Rohingya in the ongoing international justice processes including the Gambia v. Myanmar case before the International Court of Justice (ICJ), where Gambia recently filed its [Reply](#) to Myanmar’s counter memorial submitted last year.

Whilst the international justice processes in relation to crimes against Rohingya and post-coup atrocities are underway, the ongoing human rights crisis across Myanmar under an illegitimate military regime continues to escalate. No ethnic peoples are left unaffected by the ongoing fighting in Myanmar. For the Rohingya particularly, with the intensification of the armed conflict in Rakhine State in recent months, they face a systematic misinformation campaign directed against them to fuel ethnic tensions, which is reminiscent of the 2012 and 2017 violence. The UN Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR) has [called](#) upon all governments to prevent the recurrence of atrocities against Rohingya and for more political will and more action to urgently respond to the unmitigated crisis in Myanmar.

About LAW

LAW is an independent, non-profit organisation of human rights lawyers and jurists working in fragile and conflict-affected areas. LAW provides legal aid to victims and communities that have suffered human rights violations and abuses in Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia.

For questions or further details, please contact LAW’s Communications Manager, Vittoria Groh at groh@legalactionworldwide.org or Legal and Programme Advisor, Ishita Kumar at Kumar@legalactionworldwide.org.

Dignity. Accountability. Justice. *No matter who, where or when.*

Legal Action Network. Ground Floor, Rue de Varembé 3, 1202 Geneva • legalactionworldwide.org