

News Release — 29 January 2026

Rohingya genocide: witnesses offer harrowing accounts at the World Court

Geneva (LAW) — Today, the judges of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) have completed the three weeks full merits hearings on the case of the Rohingya genocide, opposing The Gambia to Myanmar. The judges have heard arguments of both sides and, in what is rare for an inter-State proceeding, directly from Rohingya witnesses, some of whom traveled from the camps in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. These victims have been supported by Legal Action Worldwide (LAW), to ensure inclusion and participation of Rohingya in international justice mechanisms.

Witness NJ, from Chut Pying, shared a devastating account. In Court, she explained how her husband and her father-in-law were killed by the Myanmar military, how one of her children was taken from her arms and murdered, by being stabbed and then thrown into a fire before her very eyes. She bravely recounted how she was gang raped. This is what she said about her experience and role as a witness at the ICJ: *“Myanmar has been rejecting what they did to the Rohingya. They have been saying that they didn't persecute us. I was very happy that I could speak in front of Myanmar, and tell what they did to us, in front of them. If I need to go (testify) ten more times, I am ready to go. Also, I will recommend other victims to share what they faced or suffered, so that their hearts become calm.”*

The Court also heard from witness MN, the sole Rohingya survivor of the horrific massacre of 87 men by the Myanmar's military in the village of Maung Nu, during the 2017 genocidal “clearance operations”. In court, he described the piles of bodies, including those of his elderly father and his eight-year-old nephew. MN recounted his experience at the ICJ as follows: *“I was there to speak the truth before the Court. Now that it is over, I feel a sense of relief and calm. Testifying was important to me because it ensured that the experiences of Rohingya victims are formally recorded and heard before an international court.”*

Over the past three weeks - relying on evidence provided by UN bodies and independent NGOs - The Gambia's counsel has brilliantly demonstrated how the atrocities described by the witnesses were not isolated incidents, but rather part of a carefully pre-planned and deliberately targeted state-led campaign towards the Rohingya, because of their religion and ethnicity. The Gambia was clear: the facts brought before the Court demonstrate the genocidal intent of the Myanmar military.

“Seeing Rohingya genocide survivors bravely testify in front of the Judges; seeing the Gambia's counsel presenting facts in Court; having UN member states meet with victims and extend their support; observing the press, the public and the wider Rohingya community and other ethnic groups from Myanmar follow the case: it was profoundly moving”, said Antonia Mulvey, LAW's executive director. *“Moreover, it reinforced my deep conviction that, when states have the courage to act, UN bodies meticulously collect evidence, and front-line organizations work closely with victims, we can set justice in motion, seeking recognition. This is a reminder of the utmost importance, as we see increasing international crimes, conflict and attacks on international justice, globally. Let's not forget our common responsibility to protect the most vulnerable.”*

The ICJ is expected to render its decision within 6 to 12 months. LAW is thankful to the European Union and the Government of Canada, whose financial support has made our work possible.

About Legal Action Worldwide (LAW)

LAW is an independent global organization that provides innovative legal assistance to survivors of human rights violations and advocates for accountability in some of the world's most challenging contexts.

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